THE MUGHUL EMPIRE

Dr. A. L. Srivastava

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THE MUGHUL EMPIRE

(1526-1803 A.D.)

By

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THIRD REVISED EDITION

SHIVA LAL AGARWALA & CO. (PRIVATE) LTD.

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHERS : AGRA

THIRD EDITION : 1959.

Price : Rs. 10/-

PUBLISHED BY RADHEY MOHAN AGARWALA, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SHIVA LAL AGARWALA & CO. (PRIVATE) LTD., HOSPITAL ROAD, AGRA, AND PRINTED BY NATIONAL PRINTING WORKS (TIMES OF INDIA PRESS), 10 DARYAGANJ, DELHI, (INDIA).

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION

It is pleasing that the MUGHUL EMPIRE has proved its usefulness to the students community and has become so popular that a third edition has been called for within six years of its first appearance in July, 1952.

As usual this edition too has been carefully revised and printing errors of the second edition have been eliminated.

The book has been made more serviceable than before.

A. L. SRIVASTAVA

Shiva Ratri
March 7, 1959.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The first edition of this book was completely sold out within two years of its publication. The book proved so useful to the students and teachers in many of our universities that there was a persistent demand for a second edition. But owing to certain unavoidable circumstances, the publication of the second edition was delayed for nearly two years and a half.

In this edition the book has been thoroughly revised and in places rewritten. The results of the latest researches on the subject during the past two years have been incorporated in the book, making it even more serviceable than the first edition. It is hoped that it will meet with the same reception that was accorded to the first edition by students, brother-teachers, and the general readers.

Agra College,
Agra.
November 25, 1956.

A. L. Srivastava

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

This book is a continuation of the author's 'Sultanate of Delhi' and has been written in response to a request from many brother-teachers and students. It follows the same plan as the 'Sultanate of Delhi', and is based on a study of the original sources in Persian, Marathi, English and French. It is hoped that it will meet with the requirements of the students preparing for the B.A. and M.A. Examinations, and also of those intending to appear at the I.A.S., P.C.S. and other competitive examinations.

While the earlier medieval period of our history known as the Sultanate Period is the period of foreign domination, the Mughul age from the time of Akbar is an age of struggle between Indian nationalism and the reactionary attempt at the restoration of Islamic supremacy in the land. It is a pity that the Indianisation of the Mughuls and other races from Central Asia who made India their home and of the institutions which they brought with them, was interrupted in the reign of Shah Jahan and altogether stopped by Aurangzeb with the result that the forces of reaction of the Sultanate period reasserted themselves and submerged those of nationalism. It is idle to speculate as to what course Indian history would have followed if Aurangzeb had not appeared on the scene and attempted to convert India into an Islamic country. His example guided the conduct and administration of his successors until they sank into the puppets of their ministers or of the Peshwas' agents in the north and compelled to give up their angularities. Notwithstanding the clash of ideals referred to, the Mughul age for the first time in our history made it possible for the Hindus and Musalmans to co-operate with each other in almost all spheres of activity, to unite in building up a stable empire, and to attempt to evolve a common literature, architecture, music, painting and other fine arts. An attempt has been made in this book to give a connected narrative of the country's achievements in administration, foreign policy, literature, and art—in short, in all fields of human activity. The story includes the rise of the Maratha Empire and the downfall of the Mughul Empire. As in the 'Sultanate of Delhi' repetitions, being a part of the plan, could not be avoided. Likewise,

all important epochs in the book have been illustrated with carefully drawn maps.

My thanks are due to my predecessors in the field, specially to the authors of learned monographs on Mughul history which have been consulted in the preparation of this book. My special thanks are due to my revered guru Sir Jadunath Sarkar whose numerous works have been frequently mentioned and quoted in this volume. My eldest son, Dharam Bhanu, M.A., has drawn the maps and my youngest son, Daya Bhanu, B.Sc., has spent much time in reading the proofs. I am thankful to my publishers for sparing no pains to make the book as attractive as they could.

Agra College,
Agra.
July 15, 1952.

A. L. SRIVASTAVA

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CHAPTER I

THE CONDITION OF INDIA IN 1526

A. POLITICAL CONDITION

(1) The Kingdom of Delhi.

The political condition of our country in the first quarter of the 16th century resembled that of the early years of the 11th century A.D. when the sub-continent of India was parcelled out among numerous mutually warring states. There was, however, one notable difference, namely that while in the 11th century the country was ruled over by indigenous monarchs, in the 16th most of our rulers were foreigners. The Sultanate of Delhi, whose disintegration had begun since the days of Muhammad bin Tughluq, could never afterwards exercise sway over the entire country. The authority of Ibrahim Lodi, who ascended the throne of Delhi in 1517, did not extend beyond Delhi, Agra, the *Doab*, Jaunpur, a part of Bihar, Bayana and Chanderi. He was a foolish headstrong prince who did not understand the character of his own Afghan chiefs. A believer in the theory of the Divine Right of Kings, he endeavoured to prescribe a rigid ceremonial and discipline at his court. The proud Afghan nobles, who used to share the carpet with Ibrahim's father and grandfather, were made to stand in his *darbar* in an humble posture and with their arms folded across their breasts. The sultan publicly declared that kingship knew no kinship and that all his nobles were his vassals and servants. When the Afghan peers made an attempt to assert their hereditary privilege, he meted out rigorous punishment. Consequently, many of the top-ranking Lodi, Lohani, Farmuli and Niyazi Afghans revolted against him and he had to resort to force to suppress their rebellion. This led to widespread confusion and alarm. Alam Khan Lodi, an uncle of the sultan, claimed the throne of Delhi for himself, and he was supported by many a disaffected noble. The governor of the Panjab, Daulat Khan Lodi, resisted the authority of the sultan and behaved like a *de facto* ruler. The nobles of Bihar rallied round Dariya Khan Lohani, on whose death (C. 1521) his son, Bahar Khan (Bahadur Khan), declared his independence. In

Jaunpur, too, the Afghans rebelled under Nasir Khan Lohani and Maruf Farmuli. The Lodi kingdom was thus greatly distracted and the sultan lost much of his prestige.

(2) Bangal.

Since the time of Firoz Tughluq (1351-1388) Bangal was an independent kingdom under the Husaini dynasty. Alauddin Husain (1493-1518), who was the first ruler of this dynasty, was an able monarch. He extended the boundary of his kingdom as far as the borders of Orissa and encroached upon Kamatpur in Kooch Bihar on the border of Assam. As he had given shelter to Husain Shah Sharqi of Jaunpur, he came into conflict with Sikandar Lodi of Delhi, but was obliged to make peace and agree to respect the eastern frontier of Bihar. His son, Nusrat Shah, was a contemporary of Babur with whom he had to make peace. Nusrat Shah was an able ruler and a patron of Bangali literature. The *Mahabharata* was rendered into Bangali under his orders. The province was prosperous and the people, on the whole, contented.

(3) Malwa.

In Central India three important states were contending for supremacy. They were Malwa, Gujarat and Mewar. In the beginning of the 16th century Mewar had attained a position of pre-eminence and Malwa had sunk to the status of a second-rate state. The kingdom of Malwa had become independent under Dilawar Khan Ghuri. But in 1435 Mahmud Khan, the minister of the Ghuri king, had seized the throne and laid the foundation of the Khalji dynasty. Mahmud Khalji was an able and energetic ruler. The contemporary of Babur on the throne of Malwa was Mahmud II, who was an incompetent ruler. During his reign Malwa fell under the control of Medni Rai, a gallant Rajput chief who was appointed prime minister and who gave important positions of trust and responsibility to his clansmen. This excited the jealousy of the Muslim nobles who tried to bring about the overthrow of Medni Rai with the help of the sultan of Gujarat. Medni Rai, however, secured the support of Rana Sanga of Mewar who defeated Mahmud II and carried him a prisoner to Chittor. With characteristic Rajput generosity, the Rana released his royal captive and restored him to his kingdom. Even this act of generosity failed to save Malwa which continued to be distracted by factious strife.

(4) Gujarat.

The province of Gujarat had severed its connection with Delhi in 1401 when Zafar Khan, the son of a Rajput convert, asserted his independence and ascended the throne under the title of Muzaffar Shah. One of the most remarkable rulers of this dynasty was Mahmud Begarha (1458-1511). The ruler of Gujarat at the time of Babur's invasion was Muzaffar Shah II who had succeeded Mahmud Begarha in 1511. He had to fight throughout his reign against his many enemies. He came to clash with Rana Sanga of Mewar who defeated him. His death in April, 1526, was followed by a period of disturbance which considerably weakened the kingdom of Gujarat. In July 1526, his son, Bahadur Shah, became king and he proved to be an ambitious and successful ruler.

(5) Mewar.

Mewar, with its capital at Chittor, was the most extensive and powerful state in Rajasthan. The reigning family traced its descent from Guhil and exercised sway over Chittor and the adjacent territory since 6th century A.D. The dynasty produced a series of remarkable rulers among whom Rana Kumbha (1433-1468) occupied a pre-eminent place. He strengthened the defences of his dominion by erecting many forts and also beautified his capital with stately buildings. He defeated the sultan of Malwa and established the supremacy of Mewar in central Hindustan. Babur's contemporary on the throne of Chittor was the famous Rana Sangram Singh, propularly known as Rana Sanga. He was a great warrior and general. A hero of a hundred fights, he had received as many as eighty wounds from sword and lance and was styled by Tod as 'the fragment of a soldier' for he had lost an eye and an arm and was crippled in one of the legs. Unlike the generality of Rajput chiefs, Sanga possessed instincts of a politician and a statesman. He had cleverly turned the social pre-eminence enjoyed by his family among the Rajputs of the land into his political supremacy in Rajasthan. He was followed by two hundred vassal Rajput chiefs. Rana Sanga's ambition was to establish Hindu rule over Delhi. In pursuance of this ambitious design he is said to have promised Babur that he would invade Ibrahim Lodi's territory from the side of Agra while Babur proceeded against him from the north. Rana Sanga was, thus, the greatest Hindu ruler in northern India in the 16th century and one of the most notable kings in the entire country.

(6) Sindh.

The province of Sindh, which had become independent at the end of Muhammad bin Tughluq's reign, was in a distracted state in the first quarter of the 16th century. The Sumra dynasty, which had established its rule over the province towards the middle of the 14th century, was in decay, and Shah Beg Arghun, governor of Kandhar, who was hard pressed by Babur was casting longing eyes on Sindh. In 1520, being compelled to abandon Kandhar to Babur, Shah Beg turned towards Sindh, defeated the Sumras and occupied the province. His son, Shah Husain, consolidated his rule and even annexed Multan. At the time of Babur's invasion the power of Arghuns in Sindh was at its height.

(7) The Panjab.

The neighbouring province of the Panjab was nominally a part of the kingdom of Delhi. But its governor, Daulat Khan Lodi, was not on good terms with Sultan Ibrahim and acted as a *de facto* monarch. His son, Dilawar Khan, having escaped from Delhi, informed Daulat Khan that the sultan harboured evil designs and as soon as he would be free from his present difficulties he would turn his attention towards the Panjab. Trembling for his safety, Daulat Khan made preparations for asserting his independence and invited Babur to help him in his designs. The north-western frontier province of the Sultanate of Delhi was thus not in a position to put up any resistance against a foreign invader.

(8) Kashmir.

To the north-west of the Panjab lay the independent kingdom of Kashmir. A Muslim adventurer, named Shah Mirza, who had entered the service of the Hindu prince of the Happy Valley, seized the throne in 1339 and laid the foundation of a Muslim dynasty. The most notable sultan of Kashmir was Zainul-Abidin (1420-1470), who followed the enlightened and liberal policy of religious toleration and patronage of Sanskrit literature, and is deservedly called 'the Akbar of Kashmir'. After his death in 1470 anarchy ensued. As it was situated far away from Delhi and was in a state of distraction, Kashmir did not exercise much influence on the politics of northern India.

(9) Orissa.

The Hindu kingdom of Orissa was a considerable state and was under powerful rulers. It had not been effectually subjugated so far

by any sultan of Delhi. Orissa, however, did not exercise any great influence on the politics of northern India. But it served one useful purpose, namely, that of acting as an effective barrier to the expansion of Bangal towards the south.

(10) Khandesh.

The kingdom of Khandesh, situated in the valley of the river Tapti, was independent since the last decade of the 14th century. The founder of the dynasty was Malik Raja Faruqi, who had peacefully reigned and died in 1399. From the very beginning, the Sultans of Gujarat were desirous of establishing their supremacy over Khandesh. Hence the two kingdoms were almost perpetually at war. After the death of Daud in 1508 Khandesh was plunged into disorder owing to factious fights of rival claimants to its throne, one of whom was supported by Ahmadnagar and another by Gujarat. Sultan Mahmud Begarha of Gujarat ultimately succeeded in placing his candidate, Adil Khan III, on the throne of Khandesh. He died on 25th August, 1520, and was succeeded by his son, Muhammad I. Owing to its distance from Delhi and weak condition, Khandesh did not play an important part in the politics of the period.

(11) The Kingdoms of the Dakhin.

The famous Bahmani kingdom of the Dakhin, founded in 1347 as the result of a successful revolt against the tyrannical rule of Muhammad bin Tughluq, stretched from Berar in the north to the river Krishna in the south. It had a series of able rulers who engaged themselves in a perpetual war against the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, which was situated to the south of it. After the execution of the great minister, Mahmud Gawan, in 1481, the Bahmani kingdom began to disintegrate. On its ruin sprang up five independent kingdoms, namely, Berar (1484-1527), Ahmadnagar (1489-1633), Bijapur (1489-1686), Golkunda (1512-1687) and Bidar (1526-1590).

(12) Vijayanagar.

The kingdom of Vijayanagar was one of the most important Hindu states in the country. Babur's contemporary on its throne was Krishnadeva Raya, the greatest ruler produced by Vijayanagar and the most notable in the whole of the country during the epoch. Besides being a great soldier and general who extended the boundary

of his kingdom by defeating his rivals and neighbours, he was a cultured patron of literature and art. Politically, economically and culturally this kingdom was at its height at the time of Babur's invasion of northern India. Foreign travellers and diplomats were dazzled by its wealth, prosperity and power. Although Vijayanagar did not exert much influence on the politics of northern India, it served the useful purpose of checking the Muslim expansion southward and preserved the ancient religion and culture of southern India.

These states, ambitious as they were of establishing their individual supremacy, were at perpetual war with one another. Not only was the political expansion of the internally torn Sultanate of Delhi successfully checked by Rajput chivalry under Rana Sanga, but even its very existence was in danger in view of the Rajput ambition to establish their rule over Delhi. In fact, Sultan Ibrahim had suffered a severe defeat at the hands of the Sisodias of Mewar and was compelled to give up his scheme of aggressive conquest. In central Hindustan, both the Muslim kingdoms of Malwa and Gujarat had suffered considerably at the hands of the Rana of Chittor. In the east, the expansion of the Muslim kingdom of Bangal had been barred by the Hindu rulers of Orissa and Assam. In the Dakhin, the empire of Vijayanagar had so far successfully checked the southward expansion of the Bahamani kingdom and its successors, the five kingdoms of the Dakhin. Thus in every part of India the Turko-Afghan and indigenous Muslim chiefs had been brought to bay and obliged to fight for their very existence.

B. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONDITION

Socially our country was passing through a period of transition. Owing to their long residence in the midst of the indigenous population and under the same Indian Sun our Turko-Afghan rulers and their humbler followers were gradually shedding their foreign ways and becoming Indianised. The local converts to Islam had risen in number and added to the numerical strength of the Muslim society, and an understanding between the people and the ruling class was gradually emerging as the result of their association in administration and in the activities of war and peace. Since the death of Firoz Tughluk there had been no powerful ruler in Delhi, except Sikandar Lodi, who could check the growing reapprochment between Hindus and the Musalmans. In the provincial kingdoms fraternisation between the two communities was more pronounced than in Delhi. In Kashmir and Bangal,

particularly, enlightened sultans pursued a policy of religious toleration and patronised Sanskrit and modern Indian languages. Zain-ul-Abidin of Kashmir (1420-1470) not only recalled the exiled Brahaman families but admitted learned Hindus to his society, granted perfect religious toleration to them and abolished *jizya*. He even prohibited cow-slaughter in his kingdom and employed Sanskrit and Hindi scholars in his court. Under this wise ruler, who deservedly won the title of 'the Akbar of Kashmir', the people of the Happy Valley began to have common life. Alauddin Husain Shah of Bangal (1493-1518), likewise, was one of the most popular rulers that ascended the throne of Bangal and made little distinction between his Hindu and Muslim subjects. His son, Nasir-ud-din Nusrat Shah (1518-1533), was a great patron of Bangali literature. He had the *Mahabharata* translated into Bangali and bestowed lavish patronage on Hindu scholars. The conditions were not much different in other provinces, though at times here and there a fanatical ruler imitated the policy of discrimination and religious persecution of the earlier sultans of Delhi. Even such a phenomenon was becoming rare as Hindu rulers in the various parts of the country were fast rising to power and importance and it was not considered safe in the first quarter of the 16th century to revive the old and forgotten days of the early Turkish conquest.

In view of the weakness of the Sultanate and the growing sympathy between the Hindus and the Musalmans, a deliberate attempt was made, a little before the beginning of the 16th century, to bridge the gulf between Hinduism and Islam and their respective followers. The later reformers of the *Bhakti* cult, such as, Kabir (first quarter of 15th c.) and Nanak (1469-1538), particularly stressed the need of Hindu-Muslim unity and preached that the two religions were only different paths leading to the same goal, and freely made converts from among the Hindus and Muslims alike. The movement, for the first time in our history, ushered in an age of greater understanding between the two communities. The presence of *sufi* mystics in Islam supplemented the work of the reformers of the *Bhakti* cult. Some of the Hindus began to reverie Muslim saints, while some Musalmans began to associate with Hindu *Yogis* and hermits and show them respect.

In politics and administration complete isolation was unthinkable even during the early days of the history of the Sultanate.

A little before the beginning of the 16th century, co-operation between the two communities was extended to the field of literature. In the provinces, Hindu converts to Islam retained the local vernaculars as their mother-tongue. In the south and in the north, Urdu became the medium of intercourse between the Turko-Afghan rulers and the native people. The *Bhakti* movement gave a great impetus to the growth of our vernaculars, particularly, Bangali, Hindi, Marathi and Mathil. A series of notable works in these languages, which are looked upon as classics, were produced during this age. Sanskrit was not neglected. It flourished at the court of the Hindu kings. There were, however, some officers at the court of provincial Muslim rulers who brought out works in Sanskrit. For example, Rup Goswami, a minister of Husain Shah of Bangal, composed several works in Sanskrit, the most important among which are *Vidagdha Madhava* and *Lalita Madhava.* In the field of architecture, too, a notable contribution was made by the united efforts of the Hindus and the Musalmans. The same co-operation was visible in other arts as well.

C. ECONOMIC CONDITION

In spite of the great drainage of its wealth by foreign invaders and plunderers, our country was quite rich in the early years of the 16th century. The amount of wealth acquired by Babur at Delhi, Agra and Gwalior fills us with admiration at the productive capacity and thrift of our medieval ancestors. Agriculture was in a flourishing condition, although Babur notes with surprise that villages rose and decayed in Hindustan almost in the twinkling of an eye. Whenever proper encouragement was shown to agriculturists, the land was covered with smiling fields everywhere; but at the time of political revolution or a famine, for miles together the eye met with nothing except wilderness. In normal times, however, our peasants produced so much corn that, after meeting the needs of the country, it was exported to foreign lands. There was a brisk internal trade in the country. We had considerable sea-borne commerce with Malaya, China and other countries of the Pacific Ocean. The land-routes connected our country with Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, Tibet and Bhutan, with whom our country carried on lucrative trade. Many kinds of industries, particularly textile industry, including the manufacture of cotton, woollen and silken cloths, sugar, metal and paper industries, were found in most parts of our country. The upper and middle class people were well-to-do and fond of luxury. The common people, on the other

hand, were poor; but as their needs were few and there was plenty of corn in the country, they did not suffer from starvation. In short, our country was so prosperous and wealthy that, in spite of its hot climate and wild winds during summer, it commended itself to the fastidious Babur, who noted in his diary that the chief excellence of Hindustan "is the amount of gold, coined and uncoined, which may be found there".

D. MILITARY CONDITION

In spite of plenty and prosperity, our country was militarily weak. The political confusion in the first quarter of the 16th century had prevented a co-operative effort for the protection and defence of the land. Though there was no dearth of soldierly talent, we lagged behind other countries in matters of military progress, qualities and calibre of weapons and development of tactics. While Iran and even Afghanistan had borrowed artillery from the west, none of our rulers in northern India, Hindu or Muslim, cared to have a park of artillery. The Delhi army under the Lodis had ceased to be a national force and was organised on clannish basis. The soldier, as a rule, obeyed his immediate tribal chief rather than the sultan. The same was the case with the Rajput armies, whether of Rana Sanga or any other Hindu king. Our armies were divided into four traditional divisions and had lost the mobility which characterised them in the early days of the sultans of Delhi. Our military officers and soldiers were guided by out-moded strategy. The fortification and defence of the north-western frontier was completely neglected. The military condition of the country was, thus, far from satisfactory.

CHAPTER II

BABUR (1483—1530)

Birth and Boyhood (1483—94).

Zahir-ud-Din Muhammad Babur was born on February 14, 1483, in Farghana, of which his father, Umar Shaikh Mirza, was the ruler. He descended from two Central Asian warriors: Timur, the Turkish hero, and Changiz Khan, the leader of the Mongols. He was the fifth descendant of Timur from the side of his father, and fourteenth descendant of Changiz Khan through his mother, Kutlug-nigar Khanum. His family belonged to the Chaghatai section of the Turkish race, but he was commonly known as 'Mughul'. Umar Shaikh Mirza was a man of restless character and was not contented with the small resources of Farghana, which formed the northern part of the region known as Mavara-un-Nahr or Trans-Oxiana and is now a part of the Russian province of Turkistan. He was on bad terms with his elder brother, Ahmad Mirza, ruler of Samarqand and Bukhara, and coveted his prosperous territory. Nor could he get on well with his brothers-in-law, Mahmud Khan (ruler of Tashkent, Sairam and Shahrukhia) and Ahmad Khan (ruler of the region between Tashkent and Yelduz). So long as his father-in-law, Yunus Khan, the Mongol, was alive, the rivals were prevented from coming to extremities. After his death in 1486-7 Ahmad Mirza and Mahmud Khan planned (1494) a joint invasion of Farghana, the former invading the capital town of Andijan, while the latter proceeded against the hill-fortress of Akhsi situated in the north of Farghana. Leaving his elder son, Babur, in charge of his capital, Umar Shaikh proceeded to meet his brother-in-law, Mahmud Khan, who besieged the stronghold of Akhsi. It so happened that one day while he went to enjoy the sight of his pigeons the house fell on him and he died instantly (8th June, 1494). His father's sudden death called Babur to the throne when he was only eleven years and four months old.

Babur's early years must have been spent profitably. As later on he could find little leisure to devote to learning, it seems

certain that he must have mastered his mother-tongue, Turki, and also Persian, while he was yet almost a child. He was a precocious boy and his faculties were so highly developed that he could easily appreciate the significance of political events and judge human character. This is clear from his pen-portrait of Umar Shaikh Mirza and some other notables of the time, whom he had seen last when he was but eleven years of age. He must, also, have had military training and acquired experience of administration, war and diplomacy.

As King of Farghana (1494—1502).

When Babur became king in June 1494, at the age of eleven, two enemies were invading his country from two different directions. With the help of his experienced and wise grand-mother, Aisan-Daulat Begam, he hurriedly went through his coronation ceremony and put his house in order. Then he addressed himself to the task of saving his country from foreign invaders. First of all he sent a message to his paternal uncle, Ahmad Mirza, to the effect that after conquering Farghana he would place it under somebody. Why not, then entrust the work to him, who was a relative and would cheerfully act as his vassal ? The offer was, however, rejected and it led to a war. But fortunately, owing to the ill-health and the suffering of his troops while crossing a rivulet as well as Babur's determination and the loyalty of his followers, Ahmad Mirza decided to beat a retreat to Samarqand. Babur's maternal uncle, Mahmud Khan, also got disheartened by the stiff resistance put up by the besieged at Akhsi and retired to his country. Farghana was thus saved. Babur now took steps to consolidate his position. His good administration and attractive personality won him wide popularity among his subjects.

Samarqand acquired and lost twice (1497—1502).

Samarqand, the capital of Timur, had great fascination for the ambitious young ruler of Farghana. It was a great city full of mosques, colleges, baths, palatial residential buildings and charming gardens. It had been the capital of his ancestor, Timur, who was Babur's ideal man. He aspired to sit on his great ancestor's throne in his capital. Fortunately, his paternal uncle, Ahmad Mirza, died in July 1494, and a civil war ensued among his sons. In 1496 he made his first attempt at conquering Samarqand, but it was foiled. The attempt was repeated next year and was a success. He took his seat on Timur's

throne and his great ambition in life was realised. He was, however, obliged to abandon it after a hundred days. He had fallen ill at Samarqand. The news spread to Farghana and caused a rebellion there. After his recovery Babur proceeded to Farghana to quell the rebellion, but Andijan had already fallen into the hands of the rebels. When Babur returned to Samarqand, he found that that city too had slipped from his grasp.

Babur had now no territory except the small hilly district of Khojend. His men began to slip away one by one and he had only two to three hundred followers left. He became a homeless wanderer. "It came very hard on me," writes Babur in his diary, "I could not help crying a good deal." He tried to reconquer Samarqand, but failed. An attempt on Andijan, too, came to nothing. After many vicissitudes lasting for two years, during which he did not lose cheerfulness of spirit and faith in God and his own destiny, he won Farghana back in 1498, only to lose it in 1500. He was again a homeless wanderer and had to seek refuge 'by dangerous tracks among rocks'. During 1500-1 he made a desperate attempt on Samarqand, which was in the possession of the Uzbeg chief, Shaibani Khan, defeated him and took possession of the city for the second time. But this time, too, he could not hold it for long as Shaibani Khan, whose defeat rankled like a thorn in his side, was bent upon its recovery. He defeated Babur at Sar-i-Pul in 1502. Babur had again to abandon Samarqand within eight months. He purchased his freedom by giving his sister in marriage to his enemy, Shaibani Khan. He became a fugitive for the third time and had to spend the next three years in hiding, destitution and misery. He had no territory, no home and only a handful of followers. Sometimes he had to beg for his bread from village folk, to go barefooted and travel through dangerous hill tracks in cold weather, which caused considerable hardship to himself and his followers. But, as he tells us in his Memoirs, he always retained buoyancy of spirit and, even in the midst of greatest sufferings, never gave way to despair. He continued his sport and fun as usual.

King of Kabul (1504—1526).

After Babur's defeat in 1501, his great enemy, Shaibani Khan, the Uzbeg chief, gradually made himself master of Trans-Oxiana. He defeated Khusrav Shah, governor of Qunduz and dispersed his army. Many of Khusrav Shah's troops now joined Babur who found himself

at the head of over four thousand men. Babur felt strong enough to proceed to Kabul and wrest it from Muqim the Arghun, who had displaced Abdul Razzaq, son of Ulugh Beg Mirza, Babur's uncle. This happened in 1504. "It was in the last ten days of the second *Rabi* (October, 1504)," writes Babur, "that without a fight, without an effort and by Almighty God's bounty and mercy, I obtained and made subject to me Kabul and Ghazni and their dependent districts." During the next six years he increased his army and took steps to consolidate his hold on his new kingdom. In 1507 he assumed the title of Padshah or emperor, abandoning that of Mirza by which his ancestors were known, and the same year he conquered Kandhar only to lose it within a few weeks. In March 1508, his eldest son, Humayun, was born of his third wife, Mahim.

Samarqand captured and lost for the third time (1511).

Although he had come to a settled life in his new kingdom of Afghanistan, Babur still yearned for Samarqand. He was ambitious of giving a blow to Shaibani Khan, the great enemy of his house who had blotted out the Timuride family from Trans-Oxiana. In 1507 Babur paid a visit to his cousins in Herat, the capital of Sultan Husain Mirza Baiqara, to see if he could secure their help in delivering a blow to Shaibani. But he had to return disappointed. In the last days of 1510 he, however, received the happy news of Shaibani Khan's defeat and death in the battle of Merv with Shah Ismail Safavi of Iran. The hope of regaining his ancestral dominion was revived in Babur's heart and he immediately set out towards Qunduz. He entered into an alliance with Shah Ismail and, with his help, recovered Samarqand and occupied Bukhara and Khurasan in 1511, and the Uzbegs withdrew to Turkistan. Babur's dominions now included Tashkent, Qunduz, Hisar, Samarqand, Bukhara, Farghana, Kabul and Ghazni. But his glory was short-lived. The Uzbegs returned after the withdrawal of the Shah and resolved to recover Trans-Oxiana. In May 1512, their leader, Ubaid-Ullah Khan, had an encounter with Babur at Kul-i-Malik in which the latter was defeated. Babur had to withdraw from Samarqand to Hisar and eventually to abandon the entire Trans-Oxiana. He returned to Kabul in 1513. The chief cause of his discomfiture in Samarqand was his adoption, at the instance of the Shah of Iran, of the Shia faith which was obnoxious to the people of Trans-Oxiana, who were mostly orthodox *Sunnis*. By an agreement with the Shah of Iran he was

obliged to enforce *Shia* religion in his new kingdom. His withdrawal from Samarqand in 1512 marked the end of Babur's futile attempt to rule over his ancestral kingdom. He now abandoned all hopes of re-ascending the throne of Samarqand which he had won and lost three times. The only territory that he still possessed in Central Asia was Badakhshan which he left in the charge of Khan Mirza.

While king of Kabul, Babur was obliged to undertake annual expeditions to put down his turbulent Afghan subjects and to realise revenue from them.

Preparation for his role in Hindustan.

From the age of eleven Babur was engaged in warfare, sometimes in self-defence, but mostly in pursuit of a scheme of aggressive conquest. He had to meet, times out of number, adversaries who were Turks like himself or Mongols, Uzbegs, Persians and Afghans. In warfare with them he cleverly appropriated some of their peculiar modes of fighting and military tactics. From the Uzbegs he learnt the use of *tulghuma*, which consisted in turning the enemy's flanks and charging him simultaneously on front and rear at break-neck speed. From the Mongols and the Afghans he appropriated their tactics regarding laying ambuscade, luring the enemy away to a place of danger previously marked out and fortified with men and material, and then falling on him all of a sudden from two different directions. From the Persians he acquired the use of fire-arms, while from his own Turkish kinsmen, he learnt the effective use of mobile cavalry. Thus, as the result of his association with various races, Babur came to possess a highly evolved system of warfare of his own which was the result of a scientific synthesis of various modes of fighting, peculiar to a number of Central Asian peoples. This system was characterised by an effective combination of a highly trained and mobile cavalry and scientific artillery, the use of brilliant tactics, such as the *tulghuma*, and the protection of the front by ranging a series of carts tied together with chains. Besides, the school of adversity, in which Babur had his early training, called forth the great qualities of endurance, patience, cool courage and contempt of death which made him a veteran leader of men, never losing hope and faith even in the most trying circumstances. Between 1514 and 1519 he secured the services of a Turkish artillery-man, named Ustad Ali, whom he

appointed Master of his Ordnance. This man helped Babur to have a park of artillery and to raise a considerable body of musketeers. The use of fire-arms had been borrowed by the Persians from the Turks of Constantinople; Babur, in turn, borrowed the art from the Persians. A few years later, he acquired the services of another Turkish expert, named Mustafa. Under the supervision of these two Turkish gunners, Babur had a number of pieces of cannon cast and muskets manufactured for the use of his army. He came to possess a powerful park of artillery which largely accounted for his success in India. Thus, his career in Central Asia prepared him for the role that he was destined to play in Indian history.

EARLY EXPEDITIONS; CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO THE FIRST BATTLE OF PANIPAT

First Raid: In 1503, while he was a guest of the headman of the village of Dikhkat in Trans-Oxiana during one of his periodical wanderings, Babur, for the first time, heard from the lips of a contemporary, the headman's mother, aged 111, the story of Timur's invasion of India. His imagination was kindled and he formed the resolution of one day repeating the Indian exploits of his great ancestor. But it was only when his ambition towards the north-west was finally foiled that he decided to try his luck in the south-east. While king of Kabul, he undertook four expeditions to the territory of India. All these were in the nature of reconnaissances. Early in 1519 he undertook his first expedition to India. It was directed against the Yusufzai tribe which was turbulent and would not pay tribute except at the point of the bayonet. After they had been duly punished, Babur proceeded further to Bajaur, which he stormed, his new artillery playing a decisive part in the contest that proved to be stubborn. He ordered the wholesale massacre of the people of the place in order to strike terror into the surrounding population. The fort of Bajaur was occupied. Then he proceeded to the town of Bhera on the Jhelam, which, too, was occupied, the people submitting without offering resistance. Khushab, too, fell into his hands; but he gave orders that no injury should be done to the people. He looked upon the Panjab as his own, for it had been conquered by Timur in 1398-9. "As it was always in my heart to possess Hindustan," writes Babur, "and as these several countries had once been held by the Turks, I pictured them as my own, and was resolved to get them into my hands, whether peacefully or by force. For these reasons, it being imperative to treat the hillmen

well, this order was given: do not hurt or harm flocks and herds of these people, nor even to their cotton-ends and broken needles." He then despatched an ambassador to Delhi "to demand that the countries, which from old had belonged to the Turks, should be given up to me". But the ambassador was detained at Lahore by Daulat Khan Lodi and Babur received no reply to his message. Leaving Bhera in charge of Hindu Beg he returned to Kabul. The expedition proved to be of no lasting advantage, as the people drove away Hindu Beg immediately after Babur's withdrawal.

Second Raid: In September 1519 Babur again turned towards India. He marched through the Khaibar Pass in order to reduce the Yusufzai Afghans to submission. Then he made an attempt to fortify and provision Peshawar to convert it into a base for further operations, but he had to return to Kabul without accomplishing his object, as he had received news of disturbance in Badakhshan.

Third Raid: In 1520 Babur undertook his third expedition to India and recovered Bajaur and Bhera, from where his men had been expelled in 1519. Then he proceeded to Sialkot which was capitulated without resistance. But the people of Sayyidpur, who did not like to submit tamely, had to be subdued by force. Meanwhile, Babur received disturbing news from Kandhar, where Shah Beg Arghun was creating strife in his rear. So he returned to that town with the object of bringing it under his possession. During the next two years he engaged himself in an enterprise against Shah Beg and in 1522 he succeeded in acquiring the fort of Kandhar through the treachery of its governor, Maulana Abdul Baqi. Shah Beg Arghun, who had abandoned Kandhar, established himself as the ruler of Sindh.

Fourth Expedition: Babur was now free from complications at home and, in the event of an invasion of India, he felt secure in his rear, as the formidable fort of Kandhar was now in his possession. At this time he received an invitation from Daulat Khan Lodi, governor of the Panjab, who, being on bad terms with Sultan Ibrahim of Delhi sought his help in making himself master of the Panjab in return for a promise to recognise Babur as his sovereign. Babur readily accepted the invitation and proceeded towards Lahore at the head of a powerful force in 1524. At this very time Ibrahim Lodi

had despatched an army to chastise Daulat Khan Lodi. This succeeded in defeating Daulat Khan and driving him into exile. As Babur reached within a few miles of Lahore, the Delhi army, which had just won success against Daulat Khan, tried to obstruct the invader's path. Babur, thereupon, attacked and scattered it. Next, he captured Lahore and plundered and burnt the town. Then he proceeded to Dipalpur, in the modern Montgomery district, stormed it and put the garrison to sword. Most of the Panjab thus came under his control. At Dipalpur he was joined by Daulat Khan who had now returned from his place of hiding, hoping that he would be restored to the entire province. But Babur kept the Panjab for himself and offered to Daulat Khan only two districts of Jalandar and Sultanpur in assignment. Daulat Khan felt disappointed and treacherously advised Babur to divide his army. His ambitious son, Dilawar Khan, acting against his father's interest, informed Babur of his hostile designs. Consequently Babur bestowed Sultanpur on Dilawar Khan, allowing Daulat Khan to retain Jalandar. He assigned Dipalpur to Alam Khan Lodi, an uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, who was a candidate for the throne of Delhi and was seeking Babur's assistance in his proposed enterprise against his nephew, Sultan Ibrahim. After making these arrangements Babur returned to Kabul, leaving garrisons at Dipalpur, Lahore and Sialkot. He felt that a more powerful force was necessary for the conquest of Hindustan on which he had now set his heart.

As soon as Babur's back was turned, Daulat Khan attacked his son, Dilawar, and seized Sultanpur. Next, he proceeded to Dipalpur and drove away Alam Khan. He made a quick attempt to re-occupy the whole of the Panjab, but he was defeated by Babur's garrison at Sialkot. Ibrahim Lodi was not idle all this time and had sent an army to clear the Panjab of rebels and invaders. Daulat Khan defeated and dispersed this army without difficulty.

After his defeat at the hands of Daulat Khan, the Lodi pretender, Alam Khan, fled to Kabul and there entered into a treaty with Babur who agreed to support Alam Khan's claim to the throne of Delhi on the condition that the latter would leave the entire Panjab to him in full sovereignty. The agreement was of advantage to the Mughul king "as it would give him a legitimate right to what he had only taken by force". After this engagement, Babur sent Alam Khan to Lahore with instructions to his garrisons there to assist him. Babur himself

could not proceed immediately owing to an Uzbeg rebellion in Balkh, the suppression of which was indispensable for his safety. On his return to Lahore, Alam Khan was, however, seduced by Daulat to throw away his alliance with Babur and to cede the Panjab to him (Daulat). Next, they proceeded towards Delhi to fight Ibrahim Lodi who, however, succeeded in inflicting upon them a decisive defeat. When the news of these developments reached Babur he decided finally to embark on an expedition to Hindustan.

The first battle of Panipat (21st April, 1526).

Freed from the Uzbeg menace, Babur set out towards our country in November 1525, and was joined on the way by Humayun with his troops from Badakhshan. At Sialkot he learnt of the defection of Alam Khan and of his failure to attack Delhi. Daulat Khan and Ghazi Khan were now seized with panic and shut themselves up in the fortress of Milwat. Babur immediately besieged the place and compelled Daulat Khan to capitulate. He ordered Daulat Khan to be conducted to his presence with the two swords, with which he had girded himself to fight him, hanging from his neck. As Daulat made delay in bowing, Babur ordered his legs to be pulled to make him bow and reprimanded him for his rebellious conduct. Then he was sent to Bhera to be imprisoned, but he died on the way to that place. At about this time Alam Khan came in a miserable condition and waited on Babur who occupied the Panjab once again without difficulty.

The next step was a contest with Ibrahim Lodi which was a far more difficult task than the conquest of the Panjab. Babur, therefore, made all necessary preparations for it and paid every attention to the Lodi pretender, Alam Khan, whose presence was sure to be of great political importance. As he advanced towards Delhi he received encouraging offers from a number of important nobles of the Delhi court. Probably at this very time Rana Sanga of Chittor sent his proposal for a joint attack upon Ibrahim. As the invader's intention became clear Ibrahim collected a large force and proceeded towards the Panjab to meet him in battle, sending two advance parties towards Hisar. One of these was routed by Humayun. The other, too, was beaten and driven back. After a few marches Babur reached Panipat and set up his camp there. Babur proudly writes in his *Memoirs* that he defeated Ibrahim Lodi with 12 thousand men. His

admirer Rushbrook Williams goes a step further and says that he could not have more than eight thousand men and perhaps less than that, on the field of Panipat. But Babur's force had swelled considerably after his success against Daulat Khan because, as usual, thousands of Indian mercenaries were ready to join him and a number of notable chiefs had already made common cause with him. The strength of his army at Panipat could not have been less than twenty-five thousand. Babur drew up his army east of the town of Panipat with his face to the south and protected his front by a laager of seven hundred movable wagon carts (*araba*) the wheels of every two of which were tied together by ropes made of raw hides. In between the sets of carts he left sufficient gaps—60 to 70 yards each—in order to allow a hundred or more horsemen to charge through abreast. He raised six or seven movable breast works (*tura*) between every pair of guns to afford shelter to his gunners. Artillery was ranged behind the breast works, Ustad Ali on the right side and Mustafa on the left. Behind the artillery was stationed his advance guard which was commanded by Khusrav Kukaltash and Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang. At the back of it was the centre (*ghul*) where Babur himself took up his position. The centre was divided into two divisions—right centre and left centre, Babur himself riding in between the two. His right wing rested on and was sheltered by the town of Panipat, while the left wing was posted in the dry-bed of the river Yamuna, then two miles east of Panipat and not ten miles as now, and was protected by ditches and an *abatis* of felled trees. On the extreme right of the line was posted the right flanking party (right *tulghuma*), and on the extreme left, the left flanking party (left *tulghuma*). These consisted of select Turkish cavalry whose main duty was to turn the enemy's flanks and take him in the rear. Behind the line at a little distance there was the reserve of picked horsemen under Abdul Aziz, the Master of the Horse. The right wing was commanded by Humayun and Khwaja Kilan, while the left by Muhammad Sultan Mirza and Mahdi Khwaja.

Ibrahim Lodi's army, on the other hand, numbered, according to Babur, one lakh of men and one thousand elephants. But considering the fact that there used to be in that age a number of camp-followers and servants for every combatant, the effective fighting strength of Ibrahim's army could not have been more than forty thousand. It consisted of troops of all descriptions who had been hastily raised on the spur of the moment. They were divided into

the four traditional divisions, —the advance guard, the centre, the right wing and the left wing. The armies came face to face on 12th April, 1526 with a few miles distance between them, but neither side took up the offensive for eight days. During the night of the 20th April Babur sent out 4 to 5 thousand of his men to make a night attack on the Afghan camp which failed in its object. But it provoked Ibrahim who gave orders for his troops to advance the next morning. They set out in battle array early in the morning and covered the intervening four miles in three hours. When they came near and noticed Babur's front line defences, they hesitated and checked their quick pace abruptly and thus lost the advantage of a shock charge. Moreover the sudden halt of their front line caused confusion and disorder in the long tail of their army. Babur took advantage of the enemy's hesitation and directed his men to take up the offensive. The battle was thus joined on April 21, 1526. Babur immediately ordered his flanking parties to wheel round and attack the enemy in the rear where there was considerable confusion and uncertainty. They made a detour on the right and the left and reaching the Afghan back began to rain arrows on them. At the same time Babur's right and left wings were directed to move forward and attack the enemy. The Afghans were not slow to react. In order to severe the Mughul connection with the town of Panipat and turn his flank through this gap, Ibrahim now ordered an attack on Babur's right wing which found itself in difficulty. Ibrahim's plan was to avoid the enemy laager and guns and push to the main body of Babur's troops and attack them with vigour. But Babur quickly sent reinforcement from the centre which succeeded in repelling the Afghan left wing. The battle now became general and Babur ordered his gunners to open fire. Thus the Lodi army was surrounded and overwhelmed. It found itself exposed to artillery shot in front and arrows on either flank and the rear. In spite of their being out-manœuvred and outclassed in weapons the Indian army under Ibrahim fought valiantly. The battle lasted from 9 o'clock in the morning till noon, when the superior strategy and generalship of Babur won the day. Ibrahim Lodi was killed fighting bravely to his last breath and 15 thousand of his men lay dead on the field. Of these six thousand fell round the body of their king. Among the victims was Raja Vikramajit of Gwalior who fought like a true Rajput on the side of Ibrahim who had lately been his enemy. "The sun had mounted spear-high," writes Babur, "when the onset began and the battle

lasted till mid-day when the enemies were completely broken and routed, and my people victorious and triumphant. By the grace and mercy of Almightly God this difficult affair was made easy to me, and that mighty army in the course of half a day was laid in the dust." On the fall of Ibrahim the Delhi army broke up in flight. The victorious Mughuls made a relentless pursuit up to the very gates of Delhi, and slaughtered thousands of fugitives.

Its Results.

The battle of Panipat proved to be absolutely decisive. The military power of the Lodis was completely shattered, and their king himself lay dead on the field. At the lowest computation twenty thousand of their soldiers had fallen. The sovereignty of Hindustan departed from the Afghan race at least for a temporary period, and passed to the Mughuls who were to retain it, with about 15 years' break, for more than two centuries. The Turko-Afghan ruling class in India had become degenerate and its supremacy was in danger. As a consequence of Babur's success at Panipat new blood and vigour were injected into the foreign ruling class. The Mughul dynasty, which was thus established, gave to the country a series of remarkably succcessful rulers under whom the country was to undertake a new experiment of evolving a composite culture for the land. As far as Babur was concerned, Panipat marks the end of the second stage of his project of the conquest of northern India. Though after this victory he became king of Delhi and Agra yet his real work was to begin after Panipat. There were a few formidable enemies to be encountered before he could become king of Hindustan. But Panipat gave him a valid claim to its sovereignty. His other contests were an attempt to enforce that claim.

Causes of his success.

Many factors contributed to Babur's success and his rival Ibrahim's defeat. In the first place, Ibrahim's injudicious policy and his suspicion of his Afghan nobles had so weakened his power that he was not likely to succeed against even a much less formidable antagonist than Babur. He fought on his own, without being backed by the people or even by the Afghan nobility. Secondly, his army, which was hastily recruited and consisted of raw, inexperienced soldiers, was a heterogeneous force, held together only by the sultan's person. It was not animated by any national or religious sentiment.

It was organised on clannish basis, the individual soldier obeying his immediate chief and not the supreme head of the army. The troops were, no doubt, brave, but they lacked the qualities of trained and skilful soldiers. Babur was right when he recorded in his diary that the Indian soldier knew how to die and not how to fight. On the other hand, the Mughul army, composed though it was like that of the Lodi sultan of diverse elements, had been welded into a homogeneous unit by Babur. It was a well-trained and disciplined army and shared its leader's enthusiasm and ambition of conquering rich Hindustan. Thirdly, while the use of gunpowder* was not unknown in India since the middle of the fifteenth century, yet no one in Northern India knew the use of fire-arms before the advent of Babur and, therefore, Ibrahim possessed no park of artillery and his soldiers were absolutely innocent of its use. On the contrary, Babur was the master of a powerful park of artillery, consisting of big guns and small muskets, which was in the charge of two master gunners, Ustad Ali and Mustafa. If it could be possible to emphasise any one of the factors as being the most important cause of Babur's success in Hindustan, one would surely have to assign the first place to his artillery. Fourthly, Babur was the master of a highly evolved system of warfare which, as we have already seen, was the result of a scientific synthesis of the tactics of the several Central Asian peoples. But Ibrahim fought according to the old and out-worn system then in existence in the country. Finally, while Babur was one of the greatest generals of his time, Ibrahim was a headstrong, in-experienced youth who could not hope to be a match for his great adversary. As Babur remarks, he was "an inexperienced young man, careless in his movements, who marched without order, halted or retired without method and engaged without foresight". He did not care to throw open the doors of his treasury in order to attract better and more experienced troops. Had he succeeded in securing the assistance of the Rajputs under Rana Sanga and made a combined attempt against their common enemy, Babur would probably have been driven out of the country.

The Sequel.

Immediately after his victory Babur despatched a detachment of his army under Humayun and Khwaja Kilan to capture Agra, while at the same time he sent another body of his troops to take

*It was utilised in producing fire-works, not fire-arms.

possession of Delhi and to secure the public treasures there. Then he himself proceeded to Delhi and, before entering the capital, paid a visit to the tombs of Muslim heroes and saints. Thence he went to Agra and on 10th May took up residence in Ibrahim's palace. Humayun welcomed his father and presented to him, among other treasures, the famous Koh-i-noor diamond which was given to him by the family of the deceased Raja Vikramajit of Gwalior for his generous treatment in the Agra Fort and whose value was supposed to be equal to half the daily expenditure of the whole world. But, with his characteristic generosity, he gave it back to his son along with seventy lakhs of *dams* in recognition of his services. He permitted Ibrahim Lodi's mother to live in a mansion outside Agra and assigned the revenues of a *pargana* for her expenses. Small *jagirs* were given to her officers. Babur generously rewarded his own men, his important *begs* getting 6 to 10 lakhs of *dam* each. Every soldier and every camp-follower, down to the meanest man among them, was given his share of the booty. Babur's friends in Farghana, Khurasan, Kashghar and Iran were sent gifts of gold and silver and other rare articles, including even human slaves. Offerings were sent to the holy places in Mecca, Madina, Samarqand and Herat. All the inhabitants of Kabul, men, women and children, received one silver coin each. So generously did Babur distribute the accumulated treasures of generations which he found at Delhi, Agra and Gwalior and left so little for himself, that he was called in jest a '*qalandar*', (begging friar).

Task after Panipat: occupation of the country.

Difficulties after Panipat. Babur's real work in the country began after Panipat. Taking advantage of the confusion that followed Ibrahim Lodi's death, many of the Afghan chiefs had established themselves as independent monarchs and fortified their strongholds. Qasim Sambhali set himself up as the ruler of Sambhal, Nizam Khan became king of Bayana, Hasan Khan Mewati that of Mewat, Muhammad Zaitun of Dholpur, Tatar Khan of Gwalior, Husain Khan Lohani of Rapri, Qutub Khan of Etawa and Alam Khan of Kalpi. Nasir Khan Lohani, Maruf Farmuli and some other *amirs* held Kanauj and the neighbouring territory on the other side of the Ganga. Bahar Khan, son of Dariya Khan Lohani, set himself up as king of Bihar under the title of Sultan Muhammad. Marghub, a slave, became the ruler

of Mahaban. Moreover as Babur proceeded towards Agra, the people in the countryside fled in fear and he could get provisions for his men and fodder for his animals with very great difficulty. The people took to brigandage and made roads unsafe. The summer season was at hand and Babur's men insisted on getting leave to return to Kabul. In the face of these difficulties he showed his usual patience and strength of character. Instead of being dismayed, he faced the situation boldly and exhorted his men to stay on and not to allow the splendid opportunity to slip away for want of courage. He addressed his men eloquently. "I told them," writes he, "that empire and conquest could not exist without the material and means of war; that royalty and nobility could not exist without subjects and dependent provinces; that by the labour of many years, after undertaking great hardships, measuring many a toilsome journey and raising various armies—after exposing myself and my troops to circumstances of great danger, to battle and bloodshed, by the Divine favour I had routed my formidable enemy and achieved the conquest of numerous provinces and kingdoms which we at present hold. And now what force compels, what hardship obliges us without visible cause....to abandon and fly from our conquests....? Let every one who calls himself my friend never henceforward make such a proposal; but if there is any among you who cannot bring himself to stay, or give up his purpose of return, let him depart."

The appeal succeeded. All the officers and men decided to stay on and support him. Only one or two disagreed and left for Kabul.

Conquest of Mid-Hindustan. When it became clear that Babur had chosen to stay on in the country and rule over it, several Afghan and non-Afghan chiefs, who had chosen to sit on the fence, submitted to him. Shaikh Guren of Koil (Aligarh), Shaikh Bayazid, Firoz Khan, Mahmud Khan Lohani and some other prominent notables submitted to the invader, joined him with their troops and were confirmed in their territories. With regard to those that still held out, Babur took prompt steps to force them to submission. He followed the clever device of dividing unconquered towns, fortresses and districts among his prominent officials and sent them with their troops to take possession of them. This policy was eminently successful. Humayun acquired possession

of Sambhal, Muhammad Ali Jang-Jang captured Rapri, Mahdi Khwaja conquered Etawa, Sultan Muhammad acquired Kanauj and Junaid Barlas took Dholpur. There remained only two formidable groups to be dealt with—the Afghan chiefs of Awadh and Bihar and the Rajputs under Rana Sanga of Rajasthan. The general opinion of Babur's men was that the Afghans were more formidable and should be tackled with immediately; Rana Sanga was at a long distance and might have little strength to proceed against Agra. Accordingly, Humayun was sent against Nasir Khan Lohani and Maaruf Farmuli, who had captured Kanauj and had established themselves so near Delhi. As Humayun reached within twenty miles of Jajmau near Kanpur the two Afghan leaders retreated without fighting. Kanauj, thus, fell into the hands of the Mughuls, and Humayun, proceeding in pursuit, took Jaunpur and Ghazipur. About this very time Gwalior was also taken by a stratagem.

THE BATTLE OF KHANUA (March 17, 1527)

Causes.

While Babur was in Kabul Rana Sanga is said to have entered into an understanding with him agreeing to attack Ibrahim from the side of Agra, while Babur attacked him from the north. The invader, after he had occupied Delhi and Agra, accused the Rana of bad faith. Sanga, on the other hand, accused Babur of having occupied Kalpi, Dholpur and Bayana which, according to the terms of the understanding, were to go to him. But this could not be said to have been the main cause of the rupture between them. Rana Sanga, who had thought that Babur, like his ancestor Timur and so many other invaders, would retire after plundering the country, was disillusioned and awakened to a sense of danger when he saw that the Mughul intruder had not only occupied the country but decided to stay on. For the first time in our medieval history a Rajput king had succeeded in organising a confederacy of most of the kings of Rajasthan with the clear and definite object of recovering northern India from the hands of the Afghans. It is a pity that he could not see the wisdom of first combining with Ibrahim to expel the invader and then settling his scores with the degenerate Lodi monarch. As it was, he found to his surprise that a fresh Turkish invader in the person of Babur had deprived him of his ambition of re-establishing indigenous rule at Delhi. Sanga was a warrior of great fame and his heroic exploits were known and admired all over

the country. His ability and strength, ambition and patriotism, impelled him to make an attempt to drive away the invader and save the country from the imposition of a fresh foreign yoke. Having collected a powerful army, which is said to have consisted of seven Rajput kings and 104 chiefs, he marched on Bayana and defeated its governor, Mahdi Khwaja, and compelled him to take shelter within its formidable walls. The Rana was now joined by a number of powerful chiefs, including Silahadi of Raisin, Hasan Khan Mewati and Mahmud Lodi, brother of the late Sultan Ibrahim. The Rana wisely recognised Mahmud Lodi as king of Delhi. Rushbrook Williams has, perversely enough, called the alliance between the Rana and Hasan Mewati "an unholy alliance whose only bond of union was a common desire to expel Babur from India". It was a most natural thing in the world to have combined against a foreign invader, for, despite the belief of the above learned historian, political alliances are everywhere based on identity of interest. Babur, who, a short while before, had fortunately escaped from being poisoned by Ibrahim Lodi's mother, despatched Muhammad Sultan Mirza with a body of light horse to the relief of Bayana and himself began making preparations for a final contest with the Rajputs. This force was unable to come into contact with the garrison at Bayana. It was struck with terror and brought to Babur the stories of Rajput bravery and exploits. By this time, Babur had reached Sikri and sent 1,500 troops to reconnoitre his adversary's position. These were badly defeated and repulsed with great slaughter and loss of their standard. A battle now became inevitable. The Rana had already advanced to a hill near Khanua, a village in the modern Bharatpur division, 37 miles west of Agra and 10 miles from Sikri. Babur was in a highly precarious position. His troops were nervous and afraid of the Rajput valour and bravery. An astrologer from Kabul made a prophecy that he would suffer a defeat. This made the Mughul troops all the more panicky. It became necessary for Babur to raise their spirit by dramatically renouncing wine, pouring his store of liquor on the ground and breaking his precious vessels before an assemblage of his officers and troops. He abolished the stamp duty (*tamgha*) for all Muslims. Even then the morale of his dispirited men was not raised as high as he wished. So he convened a meeting of his army-men and made a direct appeal to them in the following manner: "My Lords and comrades in arms! Do you know that there lies a journey of some months between us and the land of our birth and our

familiar city ? If our side is defeated (God preserve us from that day ! God forbid it !) where are we ? Where is our birth-place—where is our city ? We have to do with strangers and foreigners. But let every man remember that whosoever enters this world is subject to destruction; for God alone is eternal and unshakable. He who commences the banquet of life must at length drain the cup of death. Better it is to die gloriously than to live with a name disgraced. If I die with glory, all is for the best. Let me leave an honourable name, for certainly my body cannot escape death. Almighty God has ordained for us this fortune and put before us this noble destiny, that if we are vanquished, we die martyrs; but if we conquer, we have won His holy cause. Therefore, let us swear in the name of the Almighty that we will never flee from a death so glorious; and that while our souls are not separate from our bodies, our bodies shall never be separate from perils of this combat."

He promised that after victory he would allow leave to every one who wanted to go home. He had already declared a holy war (*jihad*) against the Rana and he reminded his men that he was fighting for the glorification of his religion. The response was instantaneous and enthusiastic. Everyone swore on the *Quran* and by the divorce of his wife that he would fight to the end and stand by Babur. The spirit of his troops was thus completely restored. Some skirmishers, sent ahead, attacked a few stragglers of the Rana's army and brought their heads, which went a long way in restoring the confidence of the Mughuls.

By this time Babur had reached Khanua. The Rana was already there, and the armies now came face to face with each other. According to Babur the Rajput army numbered two lakhs; but their effective fighting strength could not have been more than 80,000. Rushbrook Williams puts Babur's army at 8 to 10 thousand effectives, which is, without doubt, a very low estimate. We have it on the authority of *Baburnama* that many thousands of Afghans and other troops had joined Babur after the battle of Panipat and considerably swelled his army which could not have been less than 40,000. Rushbrook Williams concludes, on imaginary grounds, that "it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that in effectives the Rajput chieftain outnumbered his antagonist by 7 or 8 to 1." The fact, however, was that the odds were 2 :1.

Babur arranged his army after the same fashion as at Panipat. In front there were nearly one thousand gun-carts arranged in one long line and tied together by iron chains, not by ropes of animal skin as at Panipat. In between every set of two linked carts sufficient gaps of about 60 to 70 yards were left, to enable a hundred horsemen to sally out. The artillery was posted in a line behind the row of carts and was commanded by Nizam ud-din Ali Khalifa. Ustad Ali Quli with his mortar and other wheeled guns was posted in front of the centre, while Mustafa Khan with his musketeers and swivel guns was placed in front of the centre of the right wing. Instead of breastworks Babur had constructed wheeled wooden tripod-stands with movable shields or mantlets fixed to them which afforded shelter to the gunners, besides serving as resting places for the guns. Behind the artillery were arrayed the mounted troops divided into centre—right wing and left wing with the *tulghuma* or flanking parties on the extreme right and left of the main line. Babur took his stand in the centre. Chin Timur and Khusrav Kukaltash took their position to his right, while Humayun with Dilawar Khan and some other Indian nobles were posted on the right wing. Mahadi Khwaja commanded the left wing. There were the flanking parties to the extreme right and left. The Rana's army was divided into the four traditional divisions,—advance guard, centre and right and left wings. The battle began at about 9 in the morning of 17th March, 1527 with a shot from Ustad Ali's mortar which threw a large stone ball with a terrific noise and frightened the Rajputs. Even elephants could not stand before it. On account of this and the defection of Silhadi who went over to join the enemy, Sanga had to modify his original plan and avoiding Babur's centre with its formidable artillery which his men had never seen or faced before, he opened the attack by ordering his left wing to charge Babur's right flanking party (*tulghuma*) in order to roll up the Mughul line from the right. Both the right *tulghuma* and the right wing suffered so much from the shock that they were about to give way when Babur despatched Chin Timur to their relief. He attacked the Rajput left wing and penetrated inside it, causing some confusion among its troops. At this time, Mustafa was ordered to move forward his tripods into the open field and fire. The artillery did its work so satisfactorily that the Mughul morale was restored. But the Rajputs made repeated attacks on the Mughul right wing and, therefore, troops from the centre had also to be sent to its assistance. In spite of Rajput bravery the Mughul right wing ultimately pushed

the Rana's left wing back. The Rana now ordered an attack on the Mughul left wing. At this time, the left flanking party was directed to wheel round and attack the Rajput rear. Even this did not prevent the brave Rana from maintaining a formidable pressure on the left wing of the enemy. Babur was, therefore, obliged to send a select body of cavalry to reinforce his heavily suffering left wing. By this time the battle had become general and all the divisions of both the sides became engaged in a deadly conflict. Notwithstanding the fearful onslaught caused by the Mughul artillery, the valiant Rajputs "by their repeated attacks reduced Babur's men almost to their last gasp". Victory seemed to hang in the balance, and, if it inclined any way, it was in favour of the Rajputs. But without being dismayed, Babur, with the instinct of a general, ordered his picked household cavalry in the centre to charge his antagonists in two compact bodies. Ustad Ali was, at the same time, instructed to redouble his efforts. This manoeuvre was successful. The Rajput right and left wings were thrown into confusion by the fire from Babur's guns and by the simultaneous cavalry charges of his household troops. Not minding the murderous fire that was taking a heavy toll of his men, the Rana hurled his dauntless men upon Babur's right and left wings which were trying to envelope him. "Desperate, indeed, was that final charge; the Mughul wings were driven from their enveloping position and, forced back almost in a line with their centre nearly, it seemed, to the place where Babur himself was standing. On the left, where the pressure was the greatest, the Rajputs came within an ace of breaking through". But the Mughul artillery proved too much even for the death-defying Rajput heroes. They could not stand it any longer and showed signs of collapse. Even Sanga was wounded and removed senseless from the field. At this psychological moment Babur ordered his two wings to make another charge. The Rajputs now dispersed and Babur, who had almost despaired of victory, won the day. The battle of Khanua was over. The victor took possession of the Rana's camp, but made no pursuit of the fugitives.

Results of the battle.

The battle of Khanua, which lasted for ten hours, was one of the most memorable battles in Indian history. Hardly was any other battle so stubbornly contested with its issue hanging in the balance till almost its very end. Nevertheless, from the military point of view it proved to be highly decisive. The loss on the side

of the Rana was terrible. Sangram Singh himself was wounded and conducted by his faithful followers to a place of safety to die a broken-hearted man in January, 1528. A number of other notable chiefs, including Hasan Mewati, fell on the field. The slaughter among the rank and file of the defeated army was terrible; but Mahmud Lodi escaped safely. The military power of the Rajputs was crippled, but not completely broken. They rose again within a few years and Bahadur Shah of Gujarat and Sher Shah of Delhi had to reckon with them. The latter (Sher Shah, 1540-45) was so much impressed by their valour that be had to confess that he had endangered the empire of Hindustan for a handful of *bajra* (millet). It is worthy of note that even after his victory over the Rana, Babur shrank from invading Rajasthan and provoking the brave Rajputs any further. He stopped short after acquiring the fortress of Chanderi. The political consequences of the battle were also great. The Rajput ambition of banishing the foreign rule was completely shattered. Hereafter the rulers of Rajasthan never made any combined attempt to re-establish Hindu rule in northern India. As far as Babur was concerned, his period of wandering was over. He had no longer to fight for his safety or that of his newly established state in India. If he was engaged in warfare, it was for the extension of his dominion or for putting down rebellions within it. "Hitherto," observes Rushbrook Williams, "the occupation of Hindustan might have been looked upon as a mere episode in Babur's adventure; but from henceforth it became the key-note of his activities for the remainder of his life.... And it is significant of the new stage in his career which this battle marks that never afterwards does he have to stake his throne and life upon the issue of a stricken field......And it is also significant of Babur's grasp of vital issues that from henceforth the centre of gravity of his power is shifted from Kabul to Hindustan."

ACTIVITIES AFTER KHANUA; THE BATTLE OF GHAGHARA, May 6, 1529.

After this great victory Babur invaded Mewat and entered its capital, Alwar, on 7th April, 1527. He also took steps to despatch his troops in various directions to reduce to submission those of the chiefs and vassals who had repudiated allegiance to him on the eve of the battle of Khanua. Chandwar and Rapri were recovered. Etawa was also re-occupied. Babur himself undertook an expedition against Chanderi, situated near Bhopal and on the border of Bundel-

khand and Malwa, which was in the possession of the famous Rajput chief Medini Rai, who had acquired for himself the position of a king maker of Malwa. The Mughuls besieged him. The garrison feeling that they could not resist for long, put their women to death and rushed on the enemy with naked swords and were killed almost to a man. Babur captured the place on 29th January, 1528. He now felt secure and gave leave to those of his officers, whose health was seriously impaired, to return to Kabul; Humayun was sent to take charge of Badakhshan.

Next he proceeded against Bibban, who had driven away the Mughuls from Awadh and captured Lucknow. Having crossed the Ganga he defeated Bibban and drove him into Bangal. A little before this Mahmud Lodi, who had escaped from Khanua after Rana Sanga's defeat, established himself in Bihar and gathered a large army which was estimated at one lakh strong. At the head of this force he advanced on Banaras and proceeded beyond it as far as Chunar. He laid siege to the fortress of Chunar; but, as Babur proceeded against him, the Afghans were filled with consternation, raised the siege and withdrew. Babur pursued and drove them into Bangal.

Anxious to put an end to the Afghan menace once for all, Babur decided to bring them to battle. But he was at peace with Nusrat Shah of Bangal with whom the Afghan chiefs, headed by Mahmud Lodi, had taken shelter. So he opened negotiations with Nusrat Shah, but nothing came out of it. He was obliged, therefore, to send an ultimatum asking for a passage and, in the event of refusal, holding him responsible for the consequences. He fought a battle with the Afghans on the confluence of the Ganga and its tributary, the Ghagara on 6th May, 1529. In the conflict, which was tough, boats and artillery were used by both sides. The Afghans were defeated. A treaty was now concluded between Babur and Nusrat Shah. Each party was to respect the sovereignty of the other and Nusrat Shah agreed not to give shelter to Babur's enemies. This was Babur's last battle in India. As the result of this contest he became the sovereign of Bihar, and the Afghan chiefs joined him with their troops. He was now in possession of this country from the Indus to Bihar and from the Himalayas to Gwalior and Chanderi. The Mughuls had obtained possessions of Multan, and, therefore, in the north-western corner of the country only Sindh remained beyond the pale of Mughul rule.

LAST DAYS AND DEATH

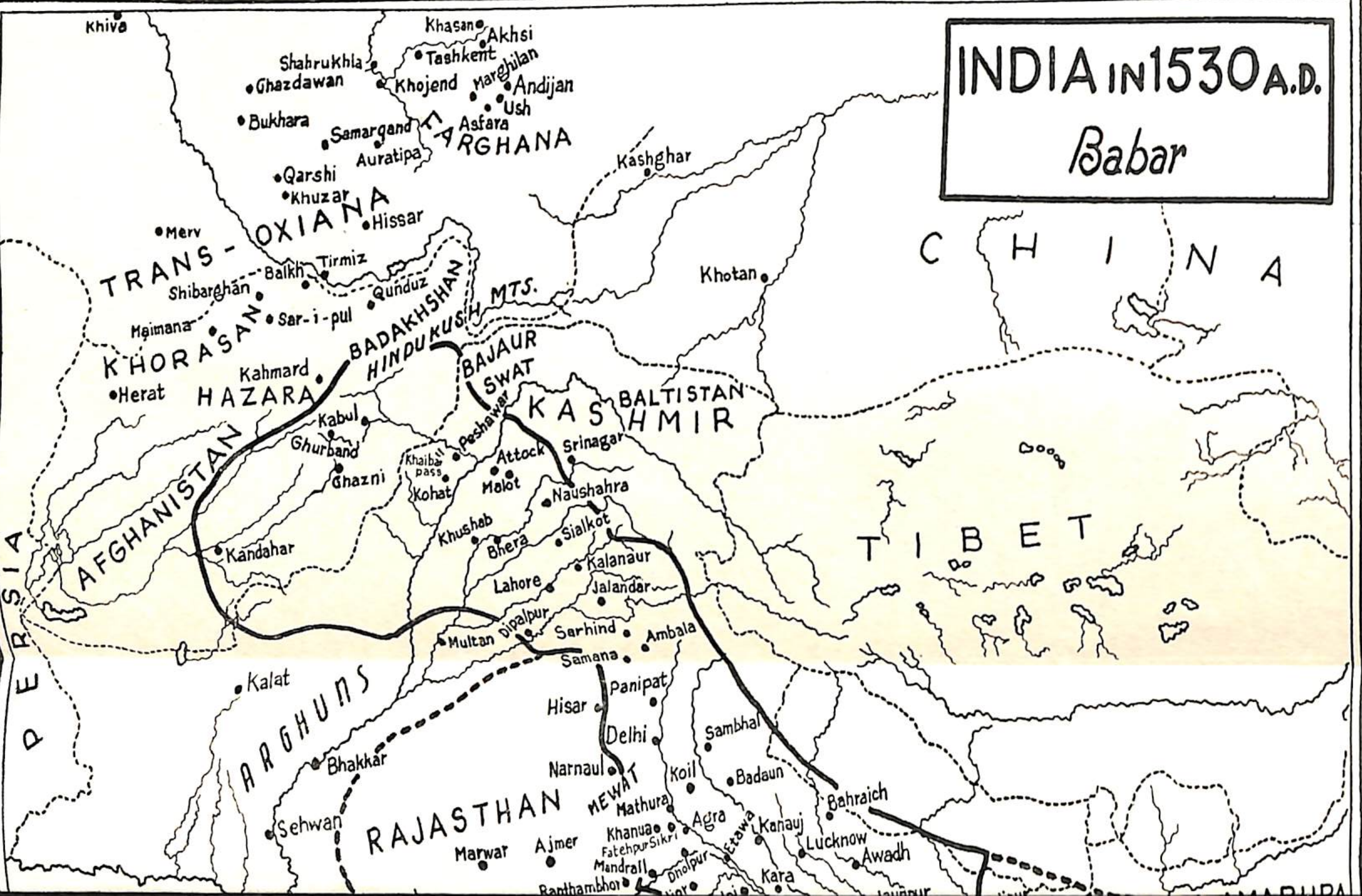
His conception of sovereignty.

Babur had now no major military problem to face as the conquest of northern India was complete. But he had to establish a theory of kingship. The Afghan theory of kingship, according to which the monarch was the chief among the nobles, was unsuitable and was likely to give rise to troubles which the country had experienced during the days of the Lodis. Ibrahim had failed to impose his authority, as his government was a "human concession" and not a Divine Right monarchy. The title of Sultan did not find favour with Babur. He had already discarded that of Mirza and styled himself Padshah or Emperor, showing thereby that his was an authority superior to that enjoyed by the rulers of the Sultanate period. He believed that the monarch derived his authority from God. In short, Babur stood for Divine Right monarchy, which met the needs of the time. The idea was akin to Hindu conception of sovereignty, according to which the ruler was something more than a mere human being.

Babur had decided to make this country his home. In view of this decision, immediately after his success at Panipat, he occupied himself during the intervals of leisure to construct for himself a palace at Agra and to raise buildings at other places, particularly baths, and to lay out charming and symmetrical gardens which, he said, afforded shelter from the three curses of Hindustan—heat, dust and wind. He also spent his leisure in taking steps to restore order in the empire which had been thrown into confusion during the last years of Ibrahim Lodi's reign. His policy was to appoint powerful military governors to various provinces who could maintain peace and order in their respective jurisdictions. He wanted to conciliate the people as far as possible. This work kept him busy during the last six months of 1529.

Illness and Death.

Meanwhile Humayun, who had been sent as governor of Badakhshan after the battle of Khanua, left his charge and returned to Agra without his father's permission. He was instructed to go to his *jagir* at Sambhal, where he fell ill. He was, consequently, brought to Agra by water. Notwithstanding all possible medical assistance he showed no signs of improvement. Babur consulted


INDIA IN 1530 A.D.
Babar
CHINA
TIBET
KASHMIR
BALTISTAN
TRANS-OXIANA
FARGHANA
KHORASAN
HAZARA
AFGHANISTAN
BADAKHSHAN
HINDU KUSH MTS.
BAJAUR
SWAT
PERSIA
ARGHUNS
RAJASTHAN
MEWAT
Khiva
Khasan
Akhsi
Tashkent
Marghilan
Andijan
Ush
Asfara
Shahrukhla
Ghazdawan
Khojend
Bukhara
Samargand
Auratipa
Qarshi
Khuzar
Hissar
Merv
Tirmiz
Balkh
Shibarghan
Qunduz
Maimana
Sar-i-pul
Kahmard
Herat
Kabul
Ghurband
Ghazni
Kashghar
Khotan
Peshawar
Khaibar pass
Kohat
Attock
Malot
Srinagar
Naushahra
Khushab
Bhera
Sialkot
Kalanaur
Kandahar
Lahore
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Multan
Sarhind
Ambala
Samana
Kalat
Panipat
Hisar
Delhi
Sambhal
Bhakkar
Narnaul
Koil
Badaun
Bahraich
Mathura
Agra
Etawa
Kanauj
Sehwan
Khanua
Fatehpur Sikri
Lucknow
Marwar
Ajmer
Dholpur
Awadh
Mandrall
Kara
Ranthambhor

the well-known saint, Abu Baqa, who advised Humayun to seek remedy from God and give away in charity the most valuable thing in his possession. Babur intervening said: "I am the most valuable thing that Humayun possesses....I shall make myself a sacrifice for him. May God, the Creator, accept it." So saying he walked three times round the bed of Humayun and said that he had taken his illness upon himself. It is said by the chroniclers that a little after this dramatic incident Babur was taken ill and Humayun began to get well. While on his death bed, he nominated Humayun his successor and entrusted his other sons and family to his care. He died on 26th December, 1530. Professor Sri Ram Sharma in a learned article contributed to the Calcutta Review (1936), disbelieves the story of Babur's taking away the illness of his son and dying as a result of this transfer. He has shown that Babur fell ill nearly six months after the recovery of Humayun from illness. His conclusion cannot be brushed aside light-heartedly. It is superstitious to imagine that the ailment of one person can be transferred to another by invocation and prayers. Babur's body was laid to rest at Arambagh in Agra, whence it was subsequently carried to Kabul and burried at a beautiful spot which had been selected by Babur himself for the purpose.

BABUR'S DESCRIPTION OF HINDUSTAN

Babur was gifted with uncommon powers of observation. While travelling through northern India he took care to take note of the physical features of the country, its climate, flora and fauna, and the social, economic and cultural conditions of the people. All these he described in his autobiography. When he entered the heart of the country it did not impress him much. He looked at it through a conqueror's eye. His impressions cannot be better described than in his own words:

"Hindustan," writes Babur, "is a country of few charms. Its people have no good looks; of social intercourse, paying and receiving visits there is none; of genius and capacity none; of manners none; in handicraft and work there is no form or symmetry, method or quality; there are no good horses, no good dogs, no grapes, musk-melons or first rate fruits, no ice or cold water, no good bread or cooked food in the bazars, no hot baths, no colleges, no candles, torches or candle-sticks.

Thatta
Abu
Chittor
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Chunar
Chausa
Sasaram
Rajmahal
Khalgaon
Teliagarhi
Gaur
Tanda
Anhilwara
GUJARAT
MALWA
Bhilsa
Raisin
Bhopal
Garha
Rewa
Ujjain
Ahmadabad
Champaner
Cambay
Mandu
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Diu
BARAR
GONDWANA
BANGAL
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
Daultabad
AHMADNAGAR
Ahmadnagar
ORISSA
ARABIAN SEA
BIDAR
GOLKUNDA
Bidar
Golkunda
BIJAPUR
Bijapur
Raichur
Rajamundry
BAY OF BANGAL
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
Kanchi
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
ANDAMAN I^s.

Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

"In place of candle and torch they have a great dirty gang they call lamp-men (*diwati*), who in the left hand hold a smallish wooden tripod to one corner of which a thing like the top of a candle-stick is fixed, having a wick in it about as thick as the thumb. In the right hand they hold a gourd, through a narrow slit made in which oil is let trickle in a thin thread when the wick needs it. Great people keep a hundred or two of these lamp-men. This is the Hindustan substitute for lamps and candle-sticks ! If their rulers and Begs have work at night needing candles, these dirty lamp-men bring these lamps, go close up and there stand.

"Except their large rivers and their standing-waters which flow in ravines or hollows (there are no waters). There are no running waters in their gardens or residences (*imaratlar*). These residences have no charm, air (*hawa*), regularity or symmetry.

"Peasants and people of low standing go about naked. They tie on a thing called *languta*, a decency-clout which hangs two spans below the navel. From the tie of this pendant decency-clout, another clout is passed between the thighs and made fast behind. Women also tie on a cloth (*lang*) one-half of which goes round the waist, the other is thrown over the head.

"Pleasant things of Hindustan are that it is a large country and has masses of gold and silver. Its air in the rains is very fine. Sometimes it rains 10, 15 or 20 times a day; torrents pour down all at once and rivers flow where no water had been. While it rains, and through the rains, the air is remarkably fine, not to be surpassed for healthiness and charm. The fault is that the air becomes very soft and damp. A bow of those (Trans-Oxanian) countries after going through rains in Hindustan, may not be drawn even; it is ruined; not only the bow, everything is affected, armour, book, cloth and utensils all; a house even does not last long. Not only in the rains but also in the cold and the hot seasons, the airs are excellent; at these times, however, the north-west wind constantly gets up laden with dust and earth. It gets up in great strength every year in the heats, under the Bull and Twins, when the rains are near; so strong and carrying so much dust and earth that there is no seeing one another. People call this wind Darkener of the Sky (Hindi Andhi). The weather is hot under the Bull and Twins, but not intolerably so, not so hot as in Balkh and Kandhar and not far half so long.

"Another good thing in Hindustan is that it has unnumbered and endless workmen of every kind. There is a fixed caste (*Jam'i*) for every sort of work and for everything, and it has done that work or that thing from father to son till now. Mulla Sharaf, writing in the *Zafar-Nama* about the building of Timur Beg's Stone Mosque, lays stress on the fact that on it 200 stone-cutters worked, from Azarbaijan, Fars, Hindustan and other countries. But 680 men worked daily on my buildings in Agra and of Agra stone-cutters only; while 1491 stone-cutters work daily on my buildings in Agra, Sikri, Bayana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Koil. In the same way there are numberless artisans and workmen of every sort in Hindustan." (*Memoirs*, pp. 518-20).

Some of these unfavourable observations of Babur were hasty and sweeping judgments. There is no doubt that he would have revised his opinion and corrected himself if he had lived some time longer in this country. His first impressions were those of a conqueror who looked down upon the conquered people. The men in the countryside had fled from before him. He could not but imagine that Indians were unsocial and unsociable. Had he come into contact with the educated middle and upper class people he would have known that our forefathers did not suffer from want of intellectual excellence and genius. One need not, therefore, take some of the remarks of Babur too seriously.

The Memoirs.

The book in which Babur recorded his impressions about our country is his autobiography, styled the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi*, popularly known as the *Memoirs of Babur*. The book was originally written by Babur during his intervals of leisure in his mother-tongue Turki. It was twice translated into Persian, first by Payanda Khan and, subsequently, by Abdur Rahim Khan Khana. It has been translated into several European languages, particularly French and English. Three important translations in English are those of King, Leyden and Erskine, and A.S. Beveridge. The last named scholar (Mrs. Beveridge) translated the work from the original Turki, while the others had translated it from the Persian version. Beveridge's translation, therefore, is the most authentic and reliable.

Babur's style is at once plain and graceful. Unlike other writers of the time he comes straight to the subject, does not give ela-

borate introduction and is, matter of fact, brief and yet exhaustive in his descriptions. He was master of a flawless style in Turki. The work is characterised by a candour and freshness which were all his own. Babur has frankly given his faults, failings and vices as well as virtues. The entire work reads like a romance. Once a reader commences reading he wants to finish it, for the interest in the story never flags. Besides describing political and military events and giving pen-pictures of notable celebrities of the age, he has given a detailed description of the physical features and the nature of the country, its animals and birds, flowers and trees. The *Memoirs* reveal Babur as one intensely fond of the beauties of nature and adorned with essentially human virtues and faults. They are considered to be one of "the most enthralling and romantic works in the literature of all time". The book is a first-rate authority on the history of the age. Unfortunately, it is not complete and all the known copies have three gaps,—from 1508 to 1519, from 1520 to 1525, and from 1529 to 1530.

Character and Estimate.

By the unanimous consent of historians, contemporary and modern, Babur was one of the most brilliant monarchs of medieval Asia. His cousin, Mirza Haider, the author of the celebrated *Tarikh-i-Rashidi*, was of opinion that he was "adorned with various virtues and clad with numberless excellences, above all which towered bravery and humanity......Indeed, no one of his family before him ever possessed such talents, nor any of his race performed such amazing exploits or experienced such strange adventures." His daughter Gulbadan Begam in her *Humayun Nama* spoke of him in a similar strain. All modern writers have echoed the contemporary authorities. V.A. Smith, for example, called him "the most brilliant Asiatic prince of his age and worthy of a high place among the sovereigns of any age or country...." Havell considered him to be "one of the most attractive figures in the history of Islam." Rushbrook Williams is all praise for him both as a man and as a king, while Denison Ross gives him a high place among the sovereigns of the age.

As a man. As a private gentleman Babur's character was exemplary. He was a very dutiful son. Though his father died while he was a little over eleven years, he cherished his memory with affection. He loved his mother and grandmother and maternal grandfather and showed them regard that bordered on reverence. Though polygamous like

most Muhammadan rulers and noblemen, he was thoroughly attached to his wives and knew what it was to love one's consorts. He was a good friend and not only remembered the playmates of his boyhood but wept bitterly on their death. He was a kind relative and went out of his way to assist those of his kinsmen who needed relief. A believer in the essential goodness of human nature his heart was full of the milk of human kindness. Though not altogether free from some of the faults usually associated with born aristocrats, Babur's private life was, on the whole, marked by a standard of morality that was rare in the country of his birth and in the age to which he belonged. He was fond of liquor and sometimes drank to excess; but unlike his son, Humayun, he never became a slave to intoxicants. His relations with women were governed by a restraint which was unknown to his Central Asian contemporaries. He was not a slave to luxuries, ease or pleasure of life. Fond of adventures, he was restless in body and mind and took delight in facing uncommonly dangerous situations in life. Having been trained in the school of adversity, he had got accustomed to privation and had developed qualities of courage, patience and endurance of a high degree. Possessed of physical prowess, he could run on a rampart holding two men in his arms. He swam across every river he met in India except the Ganga, and once, in a fit of enthusiasm, he crossed the Ganga also and counted his strokes which were thirty three.

As a scholar. Hardly surpassed in culture and in the urbanity of his manner, Babur was a great scholar and a lover of fine arts, a keen and critical judge of the beauties of nature and an acute observer of men and things. An accomplished writer of a flawless style in Turki, he has immortalised himself in his celebrated *Memoirs*. He was a first-rate poet of Turki and his *Diwan* in that language is an outstanding work of poetry admired by his contemporaries and posterity alike. He composed poems in Persian also and was the inventor of a style of verse called *Mubaiyan*. Both as a writer and lover of the fine arts, particularly poetry and music, he possessed a fastidious and critical taste. He may be called prince of autobiographers. He bequeathed to posterity a delightful record of his activity which is full of life-like description of the countries he visited, their physical features, scenery, climate, productions, works of art, industries, condition of the people and accounts even of animals, birds, flowers and fruits. Though adorned

with all the qualities needed for scholarship, Babur may be called a soldier-scholar. He was a soldier first and scholar only next. His learning and culture did not prevent him from incessant military activity, nor did they produce in him that softness which is usually associated with scholarship.

As a religious man. Babur was a staunch Sunni Muhammadan; but he was not religious fanatic and, unlike other orthodox Sunni rulers, did not consider it to be his duty, to persecute non-Muslims. His belief in Sunni orthodoxy did not prevent him from making an alliance with Shah Ismail Safawi, the Shia ruler of Persia, who was notorious for his persecutions of the Sunnis in his dominions. He even agreed to encourage the Shia faith in Samarqand. Babur had so complete a faith in God that he has been called essentially a man of faith. He used to repeat: "nothing happens but by the will of God. Reposing ourselves on His protection, we must go forward." He believed that God was guiding his steps. He always thanked Him for all his victories and believed that they were the results of His grace. It was difficult for him to rise above the circumstances of the age in India. He did not follow an enlightened and liberal religious policy towards our people.* He declared a *holy* war (*Jihad*) against Rana Sanga and incited his men to fight against him as a religious duty. After his victory he assumed the title of *Ghazi* (slayer of the infidel). Against Medini Rai of Chanderi, too, he fought a *holy* war and behaved like a Sunni bigot. His mosque at Ayodhya was built on the spot which was revered by millions of Hindus as the birth-place of Shri Rama Chandra. He discriminated against the Hindu traders when he abolished the stamp duty for all Muslim merchants, while allowing it to remain at the old rate for the non-Muslim section of the trading community. But in fairness to him, it may be added, that his attitude towards his new subjects in this country was not as bad as that of most of the rulers of the Sultanate period.

As a soldier and general. From almost cradle to grave Babur had to fight for the safety of his life and throne and for making aggressive conquests. Thus, from his very

*The so-called Bhupal document purporting to be Babur's advice [in Persian—not in Turki] to his son Humayun to be tolerant towards the Hindus is fictitious and deserves no serious attention.

boyhood, he was pre-eminently a soldier. He was "an admirable horseman, a fine shot, a good swordsman and a mighty hunter." Besides, he was possessed of great physical prowess and courage, spirit of adventure, contempt of death and uncommon patience and power of endurance. He was an equally good general and leader of men. Endowed with the habitual air of command, he could instinctively exact obedience from his followers and troops. Being naturally fond of the company of his soldiers and master of the kingly gift of judging human character, he made himself thoroughly understood by his men and officers and was, therefore, very popular among them. It was a matter of delight to him to suffer privations along with his troops. From his *Memoirs* we learn that during the course of one of his expeditions, he, accompanied by his men, rushed to take refuge in a small mountain cave and save himself from a terrible snow-fall. After clearing the snow with his own hands he secured a small space for himself to sit near the mouth of the cave. His men insisted that he should go inside so as to have a little comfort, but Babur would not agree as he was anxious to share the place with his troops. "I felt," writes he, "that for me to be in warm shelter and comfort whilst my men were in the snow and drift, for me to be sleeping at ease inside, whilst my men were in misery and distress, was not a man's act, and far from comradeship. What strong man can stand I would stand; for, as the Persian proverb says 'In the company of friends, Death is a nuptial feast.' So I remained in the snow and wind in the hole that I had dug out, with snow four-hands thick on my head and back and ears." But though so fond of his troops he was stern when it was necessary to be so. He was a strict disciplinarian and would not allow his familiarity with his men to stand in the way of discipline. He put down disobedience and even slackness of discipline with a strong hand. He would even put those of his troops to death who were guilty of excesses. "I put some of them to death," writes he, "and slit the noses of some others and had them led about the camp in that condition." And this was to punish the troops guilty of plunder and excesses at Bhera. As a general he made a clever synthesis of the various tactics and systems of warfare that he had met with during the course of his long struggle with diverse peoples in Central Asia. He was one of the first Asian rulers to make an effective use of artillery. His generalship became responsible for splendid victories against numerically superior adversaries in this country. But Babur cannot be described as a heaven-born general like Changiz Khan or Timur, nor can he be called

a fearless and chivalrous warrior of the type of Rana Sanga. In his early days Babur had seldom won a battle. He was beaten times out of number and driven out from his hôme-land. Despite Rushbrook Williams' eulogy, Babur had gradually become a first-rate general through a career of military defects, adventurous wanderings and contact with diverse war-like races.

As a ruler and diplomat. As is natural for a successful military leader like him, Babur displayed the qualities of a firm ruler not only at a mature age in India but also in his home-land in Trans-Oxiana. He maintained peace and discipline among his subjects. In his wide dominion, that extended from Badakhshan to the eastern boundary of Bihar, he took steps to protect his subjects from the oppression of free-booters. He kept the roads safe for communication between the principal parts of his dominions. He also saw that the local potentates did not practice tyranny over the people. His court was not only a centre of culture, but also one of rigid discipline. As a ruler he prized the welfare of his subjects and strove hard to give them protection from internal disturbances and external invasions. But he had no idea nor ability to improve the moral and material conditions of his subjects. He was a good diplomat and the message that he sent to his uncle, Ahmad Mirza, in 1494, when he was a boy of a little over eleven years, shows that the gift was natural. Perhaps he believed that sincerity was the best diplomacy. He could make out a good case before undertaking an expedition against an opponent. Babur displayed greater diplomacy in his dealings with the people of Kabul than with his kinsmen in Farghana and Samarqand and his success in India was due, in no small measure, to his consummate diplomacy in dividing his enemies. In the words of Denison Ross "the manner in which he played off the rebellious *amirs* of Sultan Ibrahim against each other was worthy of a Machiavelli."

As an administrator. Although so successful as a soldier and conqueror, Babur was a poor administrator. He was not endowed with a constructive genius. Everywhere he allowed old and out-of-date institutions to remain and made no attempt to replace them by a new and more upto-date machinery of administration. In fact, he was incapable of doing it. In our country his activities were destructive, not construc-

tive. The old administrative machinery of the Sultanate of Delhi had crumbled as the result of the Mughul onslaught, but Babur made no attempt to give a good system of administration to the land. He divided the territory among his chiefs and officials and entrusted to them the work of administration. Military governorships were thus set up. They were semi-independent and were held together by the only bond which was the person of the emperor. Babur's empire was, thus, as Erskine observes, "rather a congeries of little states under one prince than one regular and uniformly governed kingdom. Many of the hill and frontier districts yielded a little more than a nomial submission." Each local governor had his own system of administration and enjoyed power of life and death over the people within his jurisdiction. All that he was required to do was to assist the emperor with his contingent of troops whenever he was summoned to do so, and to remit annual revenues to the central treasury. Otherwise he was independent. Babur did not take steps to establish a common revenue system for the empire. No attempt was made to survey the land and fix a uniform demand on the basis of the actual produce of the soil. Judicial administration was also haphazard. Thus, "there was little uniformity in the political situation of the different parts of this vast empire. Hardly any law could be regarded universal but that of the un-restrained power of the prince."

Not gifted with insight into the intricacies of figures, Babur was a poor financier. He did not realise that the success of administration depended upon sound finance, and squandered away the immense wealth that he had the good luck to acquire in the treasuries of Delhi and Agra. His lavish but misplaced generosity caused a financial deficit. Even then he took another wrong step and sacrificed a large amount of revenue by remitting the stamp duty levied on Muslims just before the battle of Khanua. He realised very soon that the day-to-day administration could not be carried on without money and was obliged to impose additional taxes in order to obtain necessary equipment for the army and to pay the salaries of the troops and the civil establishment. Next, he was compelled to have recourse to impose a heavy fee on all office-holders. Every official was required to pay a certain fixed sum to the royal treasury. This produced disastrous results. Offices began to be purchased by money and merit ceased to be the criterion for government appointments. Notwithstanding these measures, financial stringency continued and his son

and successor, Humayun, had to suffer from the effects of financial breakdown. Thus Babur, by reason of the limitations of his genius, had created a system of administration that could function in the time of war only. "As it was," rightly observes Rushbrook Williams, "he bequeathed to his son a monarchy which could be held together only by the continuance of war conditions; which in times of peace was weak, structureless and invertebrate." Babur was not a little responsible for the troubles of his son, Humayun.

His place in History.

As a king Babur does not occupy a prominent place in the history of his mother-land, Trans-Oxiana, from where he was driven out unceremoniously to seek shelter in Kabul. Nor is his memory cherished by the Afghans, as he carried out no useful administrative reforms in Afghanistan which posterity might associate with his name. In the history of India he would have been forgotten, if after the expulsion of his son, Humayun, the country had been lost to the Mughuls once for all. But it was fortunate that he had a grandson like Akbar who laid the foundation of the Mughul empire so deep that it took root in the soil and continued to flourish for over 200 years. It was, therefore, Akbar and not his grandfather who can be said to have been the real founder of the Mughul empire in this land. Babur only laid the first stone in the foundation of that empire. Hence his place in Indian history is that of a conqueror and of the layer of the foundation-stone of the great Mughul empire which was re-established with a magnificent administrative super-structure by his grandson, Akbar the Great.

Babur would have been remembered and his memory cherished in the world of letters and biography, even if he had failed to conquer Hindustan and to bequeath it to his son. To the general reader it is his charming personality that is more attractive than his political achievements. His was a most interesting personality in the history of the world. He was one of those restless men "who are so active in mind and body that they are never idle and always find time for everything." In him were blended the happy and harmonious virtues of a great prince and a good man. He was so jovial, frank and bouyant in spirit that no privation, distress or misfortune could disturb the equanimity of his temper. Adventure was the very breath of his life. He was at times ferocious and even cruel, but this was but a momentary

phase of his otherwise sweet, genial and affectionate disposition. "Babur is," observes Stanely Lane-Poole, "perhaps the most captivating personality in Oriental history, and the fact that he is able to impart this charm to his own *Memoirs* is not the least of his titles to fame. He is the link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and Imperial government, between Timur and Akbar. The blood of the two great scourges of Asia, the Mongol and the Turk, Chingiz and Timur, mixed in his veins, and to the daring and restlessness of the nomad Tatar he joined the culture and urbanity of the Persian......His place in biography and in literature is determined rather by his daring adventures and persevering efforts in his earlier days, and by the delightful *Memoirs* in which he has related them. ....The power and pomp of Babur's dynasty are gone, the records of his life——the *littera scripta* that mocks at time———remain unaltered and imperishable."

Books for Further Reading

1. *The Memoirs of Babur*, translated into English by Mr. A.S. Beveridge.
2. *Tarikh-i-Rashidi* by Mirza Haider Daughlat, translated by E. Denison Ross and N. Elias.
3. *Akbarnama* by Abul Fazl, Vol. I, translated into English by H. Beveridge (1921).
4. *A History of India in the Time of Babur and Humayun* (1854) by Erskine, Vol. I.
5. *Babur* (Rulers of India Series) by Lane-Poole.
6. *Life of Babur* (1844) by Caldecott.
7. *An Empire Builder of the 16th Century* (1918) by Rushbrook Williams.
8. *Babur: Diarist and Despot* (1926) by S.M. Edwards.
9. *Babur, First of the Mughuls* (1930) by Fernand Grenard, translated by Homer White and Richard Glaenzer.
10. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, Chapter I.

CHAPTER III

HUMAYUN (1530—1556)

Early Life (1508-1530).

Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun was born at Kabul on March 6, 1508. His mother, Mahim Begam, who was married by Babur in 1506, was probably a Shia. As Babur had come to a settled life in Afghanistan, very good arrangements must have been made for the education of his eldest son. He learnt Turki, Arabic and Persian. But careless in spelling and style, he does not seem to have acquired scholarly precision in composition and thought. We are told that he picked up some Hindi also after Babur's conquest of northern India. Besides literature and poetry, he was interested in mathematics, philosophy, astronomy and astrology. Military training also formed part of his education. While yet a boy he was associated by his father with civil and military administration and was appointed governor of Badakhshan at the age of twenty. On the eve of the battle of Panipat he was sent to encounter one of the Afghan advance-parties under Hamid Khan. Humayun defeated Hamid Khan near Hisar Firuza. He was then eighteen and it was his first experience of battle. Subsequently he fought at Panipat and Khanua and had a number of other encounters with the Afghans. In 1526 he was assigned the district of Hisar Firuza and was, subsequently, given Sambhal in *jagir*. After the battle of Khanua he was sent to take charge of Badakhshan; but he abandoned it after two years and returned to Agra in 1529. He was then sent to manage his *jagir* of Sambhal from where he had to be brought to Agra owing to illness. He was already the heir-apparent. While on death-bed, Babur nominated him his successor and commended him to his officers.

Accession, December 30, 1530.

Between Babur's death (26th December) and Humayun's accession (30th December) there was a four-day gap during which a conspiracy was formed to set him aside and place Mahdi Khwaja on the throne. The Prime Minister, Nizam-ud-din Ali Muhammad

Khalifa, who had formed an unfavourable opinion of Humayun, thought that the interest of the state would be better served by ignoring his claims and getting the approval of high officials to the accession of Mahdi Khwaja, who was Babur's brother-in-law and husband of the late monarch's sister, Khanzada Begum, and an experienced and competent administrator. Humayun, on the other hand, had not shown much promise, had opened some of the treasure-chests at Delhi and appropriated their contents without his father's permission and abandoned his post at Badakhshan which amounted to a dereliction of duty. Moreover, being a veteran judge of human character, the Khalifa must have seen that the prince was lacking in the qualities of application and perseverance and insight into human affairs. Kamran, Askari and Hindal were rejected on the ground of young age and inexperience. The plot reached its culmination before the death of Babur. But the Khalifa changed his views before it could be executed. Nizam-ud-din Ahmad, author of the *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, whose father, Muhammad Muqim, was an eye witness to an incident that obliged the Khalifa to abandon the project of giving the throne to Mahdi Khwaja, says that after the prime minister had left the apartment of Mahdi Khwaja, the latter said to himself in a loud tone, "God willing, my first act (as king) would be to flay you and the other traitors." Muqim, who had overheard these words, reported them to the prime-minister. The Khalifa thereupon abandoned the project and the conspiracy came to an end. Humayun's coronation ceremony took place on December 30, 1530.

HIS DIFFICULTIES

A. INTERNAL.

The Afghans: Humayun found the throne of Delhi a bed of thorns. The Mughul empire, which included the provinces of Balkh, Qunduz and Badakhshan in Central Asia and the Punjab, Multan, the modern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gwalior, Dholpur, Bayana and Chanderi in India, was an imperfectly reduced and ill-organised dominion. Several powerful chiefs, particularly the Afghans within the empire, had been left unsubdued. Mahmud Lodi, brother of the late Sultan Ibrahim, had not given up the ambition of recovering his ancestral throne from the Mughuls. Sher Khan Sur was on the look-out for an opportunity of welding the Afghans into a powerful community so as to carve out an independent kingdom with their assistance. Besides, there were Bibban and Bayazid who waited for a convenient time to

return and re-occupy the territory from which they had been expelled. Nusrat Shah of Bangal was actively backing up the Afghan cause. Alam Khan, who was one of the notables responsible for inviting Babur to India, was a refugee at the court of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Bahadur Shah supplied him with money and enabled him to collect a large army which was sent under his son, Tatar Khan, to invade Agra.

The Mirzas : Humayun's most formidable rivals were his own near relatives, specially those Timurides who claimed kinship with Babur and were styled as the Mirzas. The first of these was Muhammad Zaman Mirza. He was a grandson of Sultan Husain Baiqra of Herat and had married Humayun's half-sister, Masuma Begam. He was an experienced soldier, but a very turbulent and restless man, and so ambitious that he did not think it beyond his capacity to occupy the throne of Delhi. The next notable Mirza was Muhammad Sultan who, too, was a decendant of Timur and an aspirant for the throne of Hindustan. The third was Mahdi Khwaja, whom Babur's prime minister had marked out for succession. He had, however, missed the opportunity owing to lack of discretion. Nevertheless, being the commander of a powerful division of the imperial army and a near relative of the late king, he considered himself to be equal to Humayun. There were other high officials also who were Chaghatai Turks and related to the Mughul ruling family. Being masters of large territories and powerful contingents of troops they entertained high ambitions and were desirous of setting themselves up as rivals of the new king.

His brothers : Besides the Mirzas, Humayun had his own brothers to contend with. The first among them was Kamran, who was Humayun's junior by six years. He was already in charge of Kabul and Kandhar. He cast his covetous eyes on the throne of Delhi. His next brother, Askari, was eight years younger than Humayun. The last was Hindal who was Askari's junior by two years. They too were factious, turbulent and ambitious, but they were not possessed of outstanding ability or strength of character. Lane-Poole rightly observes that being "ever weak and shifty, Askari and Hindal were dangerous only as tools for ambitious men to play upon."

Legacy from Babur : Babur was not a little responsible for Humayun's initial difficulties. He had not been able to establish a

good system of administration and had taken no steps to win over his new subjects who looked upon the Mughuls as unwelcome foreigners. The royal treasury had been exhausted by his injudicious and misplaced generosity and from its very start Humayun's administration was faced with a financial crisis. The grant of military *jagirs* had created big military chiefs who would not like to submit to the dictates of the new ruler, who, they knew, was weak and vacillating. Babur's last advice that the new king should treat his brothers well, even though they did not deserve it, kept ringing in Humayun's ears. Being a dutiful son, he could not disregard the advice, though he had to pay dearly for trying to follow it under all circumstances. Thus Babur had left to his son a legacy which was of a precarious nature.

B. EXTERNAL.

Among Humayun's external rivals the king of Bangal and that of Gujarat were specially note-worthy. The Bangali monarch believed that his treaty with Babur had lapsed with the latter's death. He was openly backing up the Afghans of Bihar. Bahadur Shah of Gujarat was a soldier of note and had formed the scheme of conquering Malwa and Mewar. But the greatest ambition of his life was to occupy the throne of Delhi. A consummate diplomat that he was, he entered into an understanding with the Afghans of Bihar to co-operate with him in a common endeavour for expelling the Mughuls from India.

C. PERSONAL.

At this critical juncture in the history of the Mughuls in India it was necessary that their ruler should be possessed of soliderly talent of a high order, diplomatic skill and political wisdom, and face any situation with courage and equanimity. But, though about 23 years of age, Humayun lacked all the above qualities. Although gifted with intellectual ability and fond of literature, he was devoid of military genius and strength of will. He lacked wisdom and insight into political and administrative affairs. Besides, he was not a man of application and perseverance and was wanting in the qualities of quick decision and prompt execution. In short, as Lane-Poole rightly observes, "he lacked character and resolution. He was incapable of sustained effort, and after a moment of triumph would bury himself in his *harem* and dream away the precious hours in the opium-eaters'

paradise, whilst his enemies were thundering at the gate. Naturally kind, he forgave when he should have punished; light-hearted and sociable, he revelled at the table when he ought to have been in the saddle. His character attracts but never dominates. In private life he might have been a delightful companion; his virtues were Christian and his whole life was that of a gentleman. But as king he was a failure." Thus Humayun was his own difficulty, and he proved to be his worst enemy.

HIS MISTAKES

Division of the Empire.

From the very commencement of his reign Humayun began to betray lack of decision. The first mistake he committed was to divide the empire among his brothers and cousins. Instead of keeping his brothers, who were his jealous rivals, under effective control, he made them partners in his kingdom. Sulaiman Mirza was confirmed in Badakhshan. Hindal, after his return from Badakhshan, was given in *jagir* the extensive territory of Mewat which comprised modern Alwar, the districts of Gurgaon and Mathura and part of Agra. He was sent to Alwar, its capital, at the head of a powerful contingent of troops. Askari was given the district of Sambhal in assignment. It was as extensive and populous as Mewat. Kamran, who was openly hostile, was not only confirmed in the possession of Kabul and Kandhar, but was also allowed to obtain possession by force of the Panjab and the district of Hisar Firuza. By acquiescing in the forcible seizure of the Panjab and Hisar Humayun struck at the root of the integrity of his father's empire. The transfer of the Indus region and Kabul and Kandhar to Kamran deprived him of the best recruiting ground for his army. The Mughuls used to draw their troops from Central Asia. Kamran's presence as a *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan and the Panjab cut Humayun off from contact with Central Asia and prevented him from getting recruits from beyond the Indus. By capturing Hisar, Kamran secured possession of the high road between the Panjab and Delhi. Humayun failed to appreciate the fatal consequences of the policy of a large-scale distribution of territory among military officials for which his father had been responsible. As if not content with dividing the empire among his brothers, he increased the *jagir* of everyone of his *amirs*. This encouraged insubordination among the top-ranking Mughul officials and caused him endless worry.

Expedition to Kalinjar, 1531.

Within six months of his accession Humayun proceeded to besiege the fortress of Kalinjar in Bundelkhand. The ruler of the fortress was supposed to have been in sympathy with the Afghans. The siege lasted for a few months, and Humayun was obliged to make peace and accept a huge indemnity from the raja in order to proceed hurriedly to deal with the Afghan menace in the east. The Kalinjar expedition was a mistake. The raja could not be beaten, and Humayun failed to realise his object. He could have easily been won over and converted into a friend by a tactful policy.

1st expedition against the Afghans; 1st siege of Chunar, 1532.

Humayun had been obliged to abandon the siege of Kalinjar as the Afghans of Bihar under Mahmud Lodi were marching on the Mughul province of Jaunpur which was held by Junaid Barlas, younger brother of the prime minister, Khalifa. Junaid, who could not withstand the attack, retreated. The Afghans advanced as far as the modern town of Nawabganj in Barabanki district. Humayun had an encounter with Mahmud Lodi at Dauhria in August, 1532. The Afghans were defeated and fled back towards Bihar in confusion. Next, Humayun besieged the fortress of Chunar which was held by Sher Khan. The siege lasted for four months (September to December, 1532). Instead of conquering it, Humayun abandoned the siege and accepted from Sher Khan "a purely perfunctory submission" according to which the latter placed a contingent of Afghan troops under his son, Qutub Khan, at the disposal of the Mughul emperor. He then returned to Agra, allowing Sher Khan an opportunity to develop his resources and increase his power. This was his third mistake.

Wastage of time and money, 1533-34.

Although disturbing news continued to arrive from Gujarat where Bahadur Shah was consistently following a policy of self-aggrandizement, Humayun wasted the next year and a half in feasts and festivities at Agra and Delhi. His treasury was empty, and yet he spent considerable sums of money on banquets and distribution of rewards and rich robes of honour to thousands of his vassals and officials. He wasted time and money on the grand project of building a big citadel at Delhi which he named *Din Panah*. He thus gave time to Bahadur Shah to add to his territory and power.

War with Bahadur Shah (1535-36); Conquest and loss of Malwa and Gujarat.

In spite of his conciliatory policy Humayun could not win over Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza, who were given *jagirs* in Bihar and Kanauj respectively. To convert him into a staunch friend and supporter, Humayun confirmed Muhammad Zaman as governor of Bihar. In July 1534, the two Mirzas, in alliance with Wali Khub Mirza, broke out into rebellion; but they were defeated. Muhammad Zaman Mirza was taken prisoner and ordered to be blinded. But he managed to escape from being blinded and fled to Bahadur Shah of Gujarat (Nov. 1534). Humayun requested Bahadur Shah to deliver the prisoner back to him, which the latter refused to do. He had already given shelter to a number of Afghan enemies of the Mughul ruler, specially Alam Khan Lodi, and supported them in their design on the emperor's territory. Bahadur Shah was an ambitious ruler. He had already annexed Malwa (1531), captured the fortress of Raisen (May 1532), and besieged and defeated the Sisodia chief of Chittor (1533). He had considerably added to his military strength by raising a *corps* of musketeers and securing the services of a notable gunner, Rumi Khan of Constantinople. He was fired with the ambition of acquiring Delhi and making himself emperor of northern India. He was, therefore, not in a mood to listen to Humayun's demand. A long and acrimonius correspondence followed, ending in the declaration of war. This was inevitable, for a continued expansion of the state of Gujarat towards Rajasthan and Central India must have alarmed Humayun. Moreover, Bahadur Shah had already assisted Tatar Khan, son of Alam KhanLodi, in equipping a powerful army and invading and capturing Bayana, which belonged to the Mughuls. Humayun was obliged to despatch his brothers, Askari and Hindal, who recovered the fortress and defeated and killed Tatar Khan at Mandrael (Nov. 1534).

Humayun now personally proceeded against Bahadur Shah, who was then conducting the second siege of Chittor. Being hard pressed, Rana Vikramaditya's mother Karameti (Karnawati) appealed to Humayun for assistance and sent him a *rakhi*, indicating that it was now his duty, as a brother, to save his sister (the Rani) from the clutches of an enemy. It is said that Humayun accepted the present and proceeded towards Chittor. But he stopped short at Sarangpur

(January 1535). Bahadur Shah w alarmed; but he, correctly relying on his conviction that the Mughul ruler would follow the Muslim tradition of refraining from an attack on a brother-in-faith engaged in a war with a non-Muslim, pressed on with the siege. He was right. Being more superstitious than political, Humayun thought it sinful to attack Bahadur Shah while he was fighting with an infidel like the Rana. This was Humayun's great blunder. He lost a splendid opportunity of winning the Rajput sympathy and support, "the inestimable worth of which was realised by his son, Akbar". Chittor fell after a heroic resistance (March 8, 1535). The women committed the fearful rite of *jauhar* and the city was given up to plunder which lasted for three days. By this time Humayun had moved on and reached near Mandasor, sixty miles from Chittor. Bahadur Shah, instead of attacking the Mughuls boldly with his victorious army, took up a defensive position and was literally besieged in his camp. His supplies ran short and he was faced with the prospect of starvation. So he fled during the night of April 25, 1535, and took shelter in the fort of Mandu.

The noise caused in Bahadur Shah's camp made the Mughuls believe that the enemy was about to launch an attack. Consequently Humayun spent the night on horse-back and his troops were kept in readiness for battle. In the morning the truth became known and a body of cavalry was sent to pursue Bahadur Shah. Humayun soon besieged the fortress of Mandu. Bahadur Shah opened negotiations. Meanwhile, some of the Mughuls climbed the city-wall and opened the gate. Thereupon, Bahadur Shah took shelter in the citadel and then fled (1st June, 1535) to Champaner, about 28 miles from Baroda. After occupying the whole of Malwa Humayun proceeded quickly to Champaner and besieged the fort. Bahadur Shah lost heart and fled (15th June, 1535) to Cambay, where he destroyed the fleet he had got together for fighting the Portuguese. From Cambay he escaped to Diu. Humayun continued the pursuit and reached Cambay, where his camp was attacked by a local chief, but the attackers were beaten and repulsed with great slaughter. From Cambay Humayun returned to Champaner (1st July) which was still in the hands of a Gujarati officer, named Ikhtiyar Khan. Speedy arrangements were made to re-invest the fortress which stood in the midst of a dense jungle. Four months passed, but the Mughuls made no progress in the siege. Fortunately, one day Humayun saw some villagers

come out of the jungle and guessed that the wall on that side must be low enough to admit people in. One night, therefore, he devised a means of scaling the wall with the help of spikes which were driven into the mortar between the stones of the wall. He ordered an attack on the other parts of the fortress to continue so as to divert the enemy's attention, and himself along with his men climbed the wall during the moon-lit night. The Gujaratis were terrified and confused and Humayun's men, taking advantage of this, captured the gate. Ikhtiyar Khan was obliged to surrender on August 6, 1535. The emperor acquired great booty, as Champaner was a repository for the Gujarati kings' treasure.

The capture of Mandu and Champaner was a great achievement. But Humayun made no arrangements to consolidate his rule, and wasted several weeks in merriment and pleasure. He squandered the large treasure that had fallen into his hands at Champaner. The administrative confusion in Gujarat enabled Bahadur Shah to send his trusted officer Imad-ul-mulk to Ahmadabad to collect revenues. Imad-ul-mulk took steps to restore the administration. He was joined by a large number of troops, and by spending money out of his collections he enlisted a powerful force. Humayun was now roused from his slumber. He sent his brother, Askari, to encounter Imad-ul-mulk. Imad-ul-mulk surprised Askari, but the latter won a victory over him. Meanwhile, Humayun had advanced to the support of his brother and captured Ahmadabad (Oct. 1535). He now appointed Askari governor of Gujarat and deputed Hindu Beg, an experienced officer, to assist him, while he himself set about to make preparations for attacking Diu where Bahadur Shah had taken shelter. But he found it impossible to undertake this task, as he received dis-quieting news from Malwa, where, owing to the absence of an organised administration, the Mughul troops were driven away by rebels, to Ujjain. Humayun was obliged to return to Mandu (22nd February, 1536). Here he again allowed himself to fall into sloth. Meanwhile, Gujarat again fell into confusion. His departure from there proved to be a signal of revolt. Bahadur Shah, who was in possession of a fleet, secured assistance from the Portuguese and some African slaves and recovered a number of towns from the Mughuls. Askari became nervous and neglected protection of the province and cared for his own safety only. The local Gujarati chiefs, who were dissatisfied with Mughul rule, invited Bahadur Shah to return. He col-

lected an army and proceeded towards Ahmadabad. At this critical juncture, when Askari could not expect any help from Humayun, he found his men hopelessly divided. Some of his advisers urged the desirability of declaring himself independent of Humayun in the hope that such a step would encourage his troops. Meanwhile, Bahadur Shah reached near Ahmadabad. After a slight warfare Askari abandoned his position, and fled towards Champaner (April 1536). The loyalty of Tardi Beg, the governor of the place, foiled his plan of capturing the treasure in the Champaner fortress and declaring himself independent there. He moved on towards Agra (April 21, 1536). By this time Bahadur Shah had reached near Champaner, which obliged Tardi Beg to abandon that fortress (April 22, 1536) and retreat to Mandu with whatever treasure he could carry. Gujarat was thus lost after an occupation of a little more than a year (1535-36). Nor did Humayun think it possible to retain Malwa, as alarming news continued to reach about the disturbed state of affairs of his empire. So he quitted Mandu in the middle of May 1536 and started towards Agra where he arrived on 9th August. Thus the entire province of Malwa also was lost. It was seized by Mallu Khan, an officer in the service of the former kings of that provincial kingdom.

Contest with Sher Khan (Oct. 1537—June 1540).

(i) The Second Siege of Chunargarh, Oct. 1537—March 1538. Finding it futile to quarrel with Askari at a time so critical for the Mughuls, Humayun generously forgave him for his disloyalty and pretensions to sovereignty. A little before Humayun's entry in Agra the habitual rebel, Muhammad Sultan Mirza, who had forcibly occupied the country from Kanauj to Jaunpur, was beaten by Hindal and driven to Bangal. Humayun stayed in Agra for a year (August 1536—July 1537) and took no notice of the rapid progress that Sher Khan Sur had been making in the eastern parts of the Mughul empire. Though he had submitted to Humayun in 1532, he had not sent any tribute to Delhi. His son, Qutub Khan, who was taken away by the emperor as a hostage, had deserted to his father along with his troops. While the emperor was engaged in his Gujarat expedition, Sher Khan had consolidated his hold on South Bihar without any opposition from the Mughuls. He had also defeated the king of Bangal in two engagements in 1534 and 1536 and had considerably added to his resources and prestige. Humayun did not realise till the rainy season of 1537

that this Afghan chief had become so formidable. He foolishly wasted one full year (August 1536—July 1537) at Agra mediating the recovery of Gujarat and Malwa and absorbing himself in the pleasures of social life, of which he was so fond. He proceeded towards Chunargarh on 27th July, 1537, after foolishly forgiving the traitorous Muhammad Zaman Mirza who had returned from an unsuccessful attempt to stir up rebellion in the Punjab and after his failure to seize the throne of Gujarat for himself. Humayun besieged the fortress of Chunargarh which had come into the possession of Sher Khan through his marriage with Lad Malika, widow of Taj Khan, a former governor of the place. It was in the charge of his son, Qutub Khan, who withdrew a part of his troops to the neighbouring hills in order to be able to harass the besiegers. The siege lasted for six months (Oct. 1537—March 1538) and, in spite of the efforts of Rumi Khan, who had deserted his former master Bahadur Shah to join Humayun a little before the battle of Mandasor (April 1535), the fort could not be captured. He had, therefore, to resort to stratagem. An African slave boy was severely flogged and sent into the fort from where he came out within a few days after having noticed the weakness of the fortifications on the side of the river. Rumi Khan now moved his floating battery and directed his fire against the vulnerable part of the fort and effected a breach in the wall. Then he ordered an assault and captured the fort. The promise of amnesty was broken by the Mughuls who ordered the hands of several hundred Afghan gunners to be cut off. After appointing Rumi Khan commandant of the fort, Humayun decided to proceed against Sher Khan, who had by this time advanced into Bangal and almost conquered it. Though the capture of Chunar was an important military achievement, it brought no gain to the emperor, as it commanded no important land routes, and the valuable six months that were wasted in its siege gave a golden opportunity to Sher Khan to bring to a successful conclusion his expedition against Bangal and to transfer most of the treasures from Gaur to Rohtas.

(ii) **Occupation of Bangal, 1538.** From Chunar Humayun proceeded to Banaras where he stayed for some time. As a result of prolonged negotiations with Sher Khan, who had not declared an open rupture with the Mughuls, it was decided that the Afghan chief should surrender Bihar and be allowed to retain possession of Bangal as a Mughul vassal on payment of an annual tribute of ten lakhs of rupees. Sher Khan accepted the terms;

but Humayun, who was in correspondence with Mahmud of Bangal and had by this time proceeded as far as Maner, hesitated to ratify the treaty. He wavered between peace with Sher Khan and the prospect of conquest of Bangal on his own account. Eventually he decided in favour of the latter.

While Sher Khan's army under his general, Khawas Khan, was invading Bangal, its king, Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud appealed to Humayun for assistance; but, as no reinforcements reached him from any quarter, he fled to Hajipur, and his capital, Gaur, fell into Afghan hands on April 6, 1538. The fugitive Mahmud was now pursued by Sher Khan, but he escaped with his life and reached Humayun's camp at Maner and personally appealed to him for help in recovering Bangal. Humayun took pity on him, broke his recent understanding with Sher Khan, and proceeded towards Gaur. The ex-king, Mahmud, died of his wounds at Khalgaon (Kolgaon). Yet Humayun continued his march and reached Teliagarhi towards the end of May. He found the road to Gaur blocked by Jalal Khan, who had been posted by his father to defend that pass. As the Mughuls reached the place they were attacked by Jalal Khan who inflicted a considerable loss on them. A heavy storm which flooded the country prevented Humayun's advance for many days. Only after the receipt of the news that his father had transferred the Gaur treasure to Rohtas, did Jalal Khan abandon Teliagarhi and retire to join Sher Khan. Seeing that the Afghans had retreated, Humayun entered Bangal and reached Gaur (15 Aug., 1538). He found it a desolate place with its streets littered with dead bodies. Nevertheless, he chose to stay there, gave the place the name of Jannatabad (abode of paradise), and wasted about eight months in frivolous pursuits. His officers and soldiers followed his example and everyone devoted himself to ease and pleasure.

The emperor had not taken any step to maintain communication with Agra or Delhi except posting Hindal at Tirhut. He had even failed to maintain contact with Banaras, which was the nearest place in the Mughul territory and was 350 miles west of Gaur. The neglect of the most elementary military precautions enabled Sher Khan to cut Humayun off from his capital. Making Jharkhand, a hilly region in South Bihar surrounded by thorny jungle, his base, he devised a masterly plan of sending troops to occupy the entire country

from Teliagarhi to Kanauj. He rapidly over-ran the country and captured Banaras. His son, Jalal Khan, besieged Jaunpur and even invested Chunargarh. The Afghans captured Kara, Bahraich, Kanauj and Sambhal. Thus by the middle of January 1539, the entire country between the Kosi and the Ganga passed under the control of Sher Khan. Humayun's brother, Hindal, had already abandoned his post on north Bihar and retired to Agra where he entertained the wild project of setting himself up as ruler. Contrary to the advice of his mother, he assumed the title of king and killed Shaikh Bahlol, for whom Humayun had great regard. When the prospect appeared dismal, the Mughul officers, who had so far concealed the news of these distressing happenings, felt alarmed and apprised Humayun of the loss of the territory. Humayun decided to return to Agra without delay. He left Jahangir Quli Beg with 5,000 men in charge of Gaur and himself began his return march towards Patna at the end of March 1539.

(iii) **Battle of Chausa, June 26, 1539.** Dividing his army into two parts, Humayun ordered Askari to take charge of the first division and proceed ahead. The second division under his personal command marched a few miles behind. At Mungir the two divisions joined, and here, contrary to the advice of his seasoned officers, Humayun crossed the Ganga to its southern bank and took the old Grand Trunk Road towards Agra. This was a great mistake. Though Humayun now had the advantage of a better road, the southern route, which lay through South Bihar, was thoroughly under Sher Khan's control. The vigilant Afghan scouts regularly communicated to their master the movements of the Mughul army. It was this blunder on the part of Humayun which enabled Sher Khan to decide upon an open contest with him. The emperor, however, could not keep to the Grand Trunk Road, and near Bihiya (in Bhojpur district) he was obliged to cross the Ganga back to its northern bank. As Humayun reached Chausa, 10 miles south-west of Baksar and a short distance from the river Karmanasa, which is the boundary between Bihar and the modern Uttar Pradesh he received news that Sher Khan had reached the neighbourhood. His officers were for an immediate attack on the Afghans who were tired as a result of several days' journey, while the Mughul troops were, comparatively, fresh. But Humayun foolishly rejected their sound advice. He, however, decided to re-cross the river to its southern bank and wait there instead

of attacking the enemy at once. The delay gave Sher Khan time to fortify his camp and to give the much needed rest to his men. A large number of Afghan troops gathered under his banner. On the contrary, Humayun received no help from his brothers, Hindal who was openly acting as king at Agra, and Askari who too harboured treasonable designs. Many of his troops deserted him on account of disease, hardship and fear of the enemy. But there was no escape; Sher Khan had blocked the road to Agra and the sword alone could settle their dispute. The antagonists, however, lay facing each other for three months (April to June 26, 1539), but neither of them took up the offensive. Sher Khan purposely delayed the contest, as he felt that the coming of the rainy season would hamper the Mughuls and give him a decided advantage over them. During the period there was an interchange of envoys for a peaceful settlement; but Sher Khan who had a bitter experience of Humayun's breach of agreement about a year before, did not believe in the Mughul *bonafides* and used the time to put the enemy off his guard. The Afghan chief showed his hand as soon as the rains set in. The Mughul encampment, which stood on the low land between the Ganga in the north and the Karmanasa in the west, was flooded, causing confusion and indiscipline among its ranks. Sher Khan deluded the Mughuls by signing a treaty and sending his troops to fight the Cheros. On 25th June, 1539, he marshalled his troops and gave out that he was proceeding to attack Maharatha Chero who was the chief of an aborginal tribe in the Shahabad district of Bihar. The news put the Mughuls off their guard, as Sher Khan actually proceeded five miles in the direction of the Chero territory; but after this he took a turn eastward, crossed the river unperceived some five miles below Humayun's camp and riding due north returned after mid-night and made a surprise attack on the Mughuls who were asleep in their camps. The Afghan army, which was divided into three divisions under Sher Khan, his son Jalal Khan, and his greatest general Khawas Khan respectively, attacked the Mughuls from three directions. Consternation fell upon the imperialists. The tumult aroused Humayun who sprang on a horse and tried to collect his men. But most of his troops had already dispersed and fled to save themselves. Humayun failed to reach his tent, but he was conducted out of danger by a few of his trusted followers. He could not cross the Ganga on an elephant and was obliged to make use of an inflated skin (*Mashak*) of a water-carrier (Nizam) to reach the other bank in safety. His entire camp, including many of the ladies of his *harem*, fell into the hands of

Sher Khan. Almost the whole of the Mughul army was annihilated. Humayun himself, attended by a few men, fled towards Agra.

In the battle fell eight thousand Mughul troops and a number of Mughul notables, including the restless Muhammad Zaman Mirza. Two of Humayun's queens and one daughter were either killed or drowned. His chief queen, Bega Begam, along with many other Mughul ladies, was taken prisoner. Sher Khan made all arrangements for their protection and, subsequently, sent them back to Humayun under an escort.

(iv) The Battle of Bilgram, May 17, 1540. At Agra all the brothers met and held prolonged discussions about the measures to be adopted against their enemy, who, flushed with his recent victory, had ascended the throne and assumed the title of Sher Shah. Kamran, who had come to the Mughul capital during Humayun's absence and was actuated by selfish motives, offered to undertake an expedition against the Afghan ruler with his 20,000 fresh troops from the Panjab; but Humayun, aware of his designs, rejected the offer, specially as its acceptance would have brought a slur on his position as the head of the Mughul ruling family. In spite of the imminent danger of losing all they possessed and the earnest endeavour of Mirza Haider Dughlat, Babur's cousin, to compose their differences, the brothers did not agree to unite. Kamran foolishly believed that if he refrained from co-operating with his elder brother he would be allowed by Sher Shah to remain unmolested in his possessions of the Panjab and Hisar Firuza. Moreover, he imagined, though not without insufficient ground, that his illness at Agra, from which he was suffering at the time, was due to the poison administered to him at the instance of Humayun. Askari felt that Humayun lacked in requisite firmness and, therefore, became indifferent. In these abortive discussions, much valuable time was wasted, and Sher Shah, whose first work after the battle of Chausa was to occupy the whole of Bangal and annihilate the troops left by Humayun at Gaur, had now returned to the west and was rapidly approaching Agra at the head of a powerful body of troops. His men had already occupied Lucknow and Kanauj and he himself now reached the latter place (February 1540). No time was, therefore, to be lost. Kamran, in spite of the entreaties of his brother, refused to lend his army and returned to Lahore with most of his

troops. A feverish attempt was now made to get together fresh troops besides those that had reached Agra from the wreck of Chausa and their number reached 90,000. But most of these were raw recruits who had no experience of battle. With this motley crowd Humayun proceeded to meet the enemy and reached Bhojpur near Kanauj, and set up his encampment there. Sher Shah, who had already arrived, pitched his camp on the other side of the Ganga opposite Kanauj at a distance of about 23 miles from Humayun's encampment. Humayun's troops continued to swell; their number reached two lakhs. One month (April 1540) passed, neither side taking the offensive. The only activity displayed by Humayun was to cross the Ganga to the side of the town of Bilgram. He encamped at a distance of 3 miles from the Ganga and near Bilgram.

On May 15 there was a heavy shower of rain which swamped the Mughul camp. It was, consequently, decided to shift the encampment to a higher spot in the neighbourhood. As the Mughuls issued out of their camp to make a demonstration on 17th May, 1540, as preparatory to the shifting of their camp which was fixed for the following day, Sher Shah ordered his men to take the field and launch an attack on the enemy. He thus cleverly deprived Humayun of the use of his heavy guns. Moreover, the Mughuls, who were not yet ready for battle, were taken by surprise. Humayun had already appointed Mirza Haider his generalissimo under whose direction the Mughul troops were quickly marshalled in battle array. Humayun and Mirza Haider commanded the centre. The left wing, which was near the river, was placed under Hindal, while the right wing was commanded by Yadgar Nasir Mirza. Askari led the advance guard. The front was stiffened by 5,000 matchlockmen. There was no reserve and no flanking parties. The effective fighting strength of the Mughuls was 40,000.

Though Mirza Haider estimated the strength of the Afghan army at 15,000, the total number of combatants under Sher Shah could not have been less than 40,000. He divided his army into seven divisions taking his stand at the centre which was protected by a trench. Besides a reserve, he posted flanking parties to the extreme right and left of his wings. In order to take the Mughuls by surprise and to cut them off from the river and their base, he ordered an attack on Humayun's left wing. Hindal, who commanded the left wing, acquitted himself

creditably in the initial stage of the battle and wounded Jalal Khan; but Sher Shah sent timely reinforcement to assist his son who now took up the offensive with vigour. The vanguards of the armies also came into clash and Askari was repelled by the Afghans. As the heavy Mughul guns could not be drawn to the battle-ground in the hurry of the contest, the Mughul artillery played no part. Mirza Haider had to record: "not a cannon was fired—not a gun. The artillery was totally useless." The Afghan attack was so vigorous that the Mughul troops whose movement was impeded by the presence of unruly camp-followers began to flee and Humayun's efforts to rally them came to nothing. He was, therefore, compelled to quit the field and flee to Agra. He crossed the river with difficulty. Vast number of his men were drowned in the Ganga and he had only a small band of followers left. On the way his small party was attacked by the people of Bhogaon in Mainpuri district, and he could reach Agra with difficulty.

(v) **Humayun, a fugitive, 1540.** Agra could not afford the fugitive king a safe asylum for long, as news came that a party of Afghans was following him. Humayun, therefore, abandoned the city and hurried on to Lahore, crossing the swollen rivers of the Panjab with difficulty. Hardly had he reached Lahore when news came that the Afghans had occupied Agra and Delhi without resistance. Humayun's brothers met him at Lahore, but once again failed, to offer a united front against their common enemy. Kamran, anxious to retain the Panjab and Afghanistan, showed no inclination to incur the displeasure of Sher Shah by assisting Humayun. Meanwhile, Sher Shah reached the Panjab itself and contemptuously rejected the ex-emperor's request to allow Sarhind to be the boundary between their two dominions. There was no alternative except flight. Humayun was torn between Mirza Haider's advice that he should withdraw to Kashmir and conquer Hindustan from there and that of Hindal and Yadgar Mirza who suggested retreat through Sindh to Gujarat and the invasion of Delhi from there. While these futile discussions were going on, it was discovered that Kamran was in treacherous correspondence with Sher Shah to whom he offered assistance if he were left in possession of the Panjab and Kabul. This broke up their meeting, and Humayun decided to accept Mirza Haider's sound suggestion of proceeding to Kashmir; but, as Kamran prepared to obstruct his passage to Kashmir by force of arms, he had to abandon the project. Hindal also deserted him and proceeded to invade

Sindh. Humayun now made another attempt to proceed to Kashmir, which, too, was foiled by the traitorous Kamran who again made a military demonstration against his fugitive brother. Nor could Humayun proceed to Badakhshan as Kamran's treacherous conduct had prepared him to suspect that Humayun would seize Kabul also. Thus for the third time Kamran prevented his brother from carving out a new kingdom for himself. Humayun was now compelled to proceed towards Sindh and join Hindal (December 1540). Near Khushab, there was again an ugly prospect of a quarrel with Kamran who wanted to be the first to pass through a defile in the Salt Range. But the trouble was averted by the intervention of a holy man. After this incident Humayun took his way towards Sindh and began his march through the most inhospitable part of the country.

Causes of Humayun's expulsion. Imp

It is convenient at this place to examine the causesof Humayun's expulsion from his dominion. Although he had inherited from his father a precarious throne and an empty treasury under circumstances that would have caused considerable headache even to an abler and far-sighted administrator, all his initial difficulties could have been overcome by a wise and statesman-like policy. The circumstances responsible for his deposition must, therefore, be considered to have been very largely the result of his own failings. In the first place, Humayun began badly by foolishly dividing his kingdom among his unworthy and treacherous brothers, though the supreme need of the hour was a unified and central control of even the widest parts of the nascent and far-flung Mughul empire which, in its very infancy, had to contend with numerous enemies, internal as well as external. The accession of Kabul and the Punjab to the hostile Kamran cut Humayun off from the main recruiting ground of his army and sapped the very foundation of his power which was based on military force. Secondly, instead of devising constructive measures of consolidation and reform in order to win over his subjects, which was so essential in the interest of his dynasty and kingdom, the emperor, right from the beginning of his reign, launched a policy of aggressive warfare. His expedition against the Chandel-ruler of Kalinjar was un-called for. Even if the raja was in sympathy with the Afghans, which is, however, doubtful he could have been easily won over by a policy of tact and generosity. As it was, Humayun's failure before the strong fort of Kalinjar brought him little prestige even though the raja agreed to pay a huge

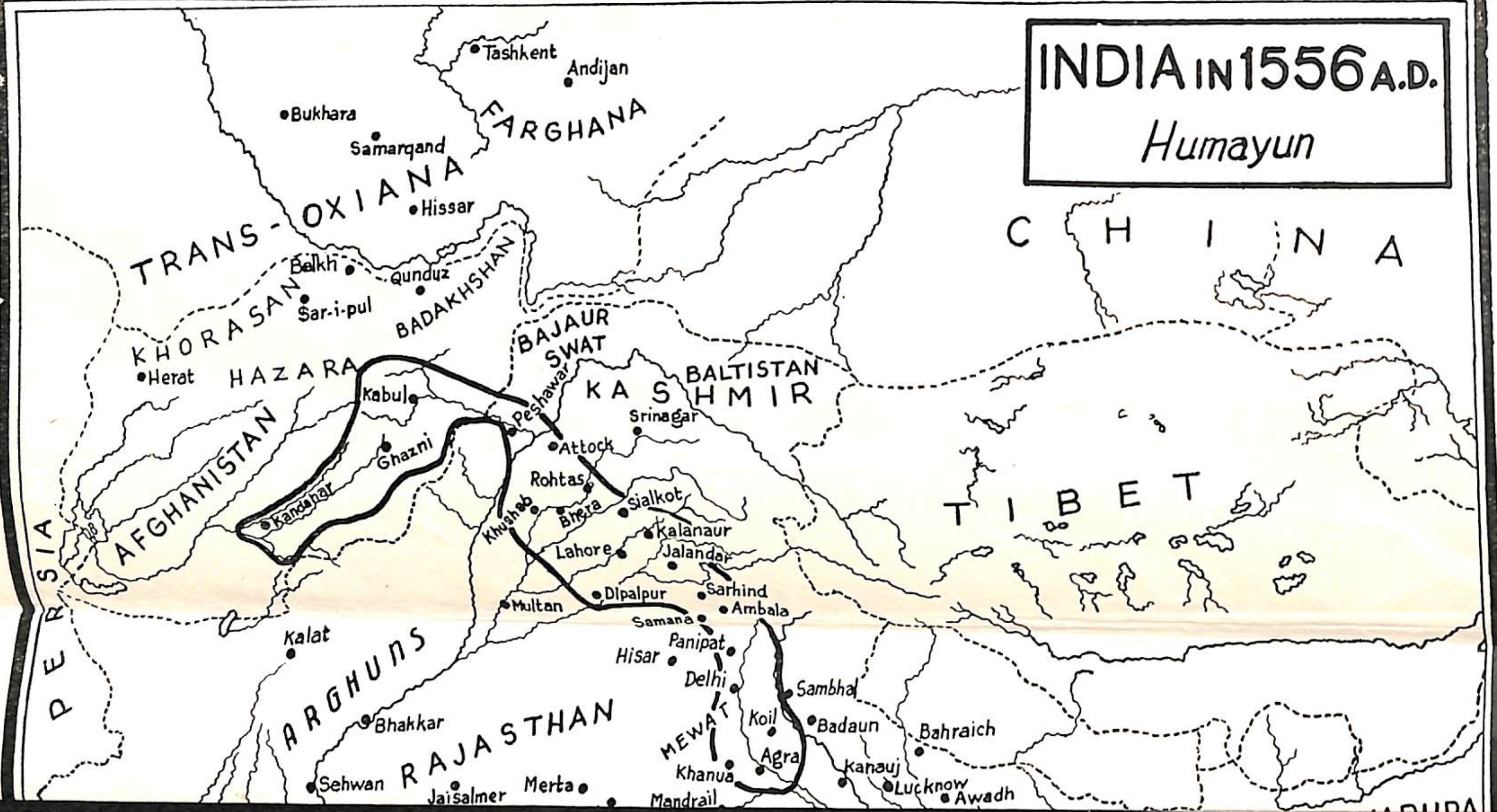
war indemnity. Thirdly, Humayun failed to understand and appreciate the enormous accession in the power and prestige of Sher Khan. He seems to have believed till as late as the early months of 1539 that the Afghan chief was a mere upstart and could easily be brought round. The emperor did not make a sustained effort to root out Sher Khan. He foolishly made a perfunctory peace with him after the first siege of Chunar in 1532 and permitted him to retain that fortress. A wise ruler would have followed up his early success (August 1532) and would have concentrated his power and attention on the extermination of the Afghans before taking up any other military campaign. Fourthly, Humayun failed to see that there was an understanding between Bahadur Shah of Gujarat and Sher Khan of South Bihar to the effect that while the emperor was busy against one, the other should create strife so as to divert Humayun's attention. That was probably why he wasted much time in frivolous feasts and pleasure-parties at Agra and Delhi and squandered his already depleted treasury on banquets, distribution of rewards to his followers and building projects, all of which he supervised personally. Fifthly, in his belated campaign against Bahadur Shah of Gujarat he committed numerous blunders which not only brought about the loss of his recent conquests of Malwa and Gujarat but foretold his future disgrace and downfall. He should have boldly attacked Bahadur Shah while the latter was engaged in a death struggle with the Rajputs of Chittor. This would have brought not only an immediate collapse of Bahadur's power and saved Humayun from a prolonged campaign in western India, but would have also won for the emperor the sympathy and support of the Rajputs. It was unfortunate that after the conquest of Malwa and Gujarat Humayun wasted many weeks in idle pleasures at Mandu which gave Bahadur an opportunity to send his men from Diu to recover a large part of Gujarat. The emperor established no civil administration in the conquered provinces. His brother, Askari, would not have played false to him at Ahmadabad, if proper arrangements had been made for consolidating the Mughuls hold over Gujarat, by establishing military garrisons in various parts and giving the land a wise and generous revenue administration. In the absence of these measures, the temporary Mughul rule in Malwa and Gujarat was like a military occupation of the land and bound to collapse in the event of any military set-back. Sixthly, Humayun's next expedition against Sher Khan was undertaken in the same haphazard fashion. He had no wellthought-out scheme of action either against Bahadur Shah or against Sher

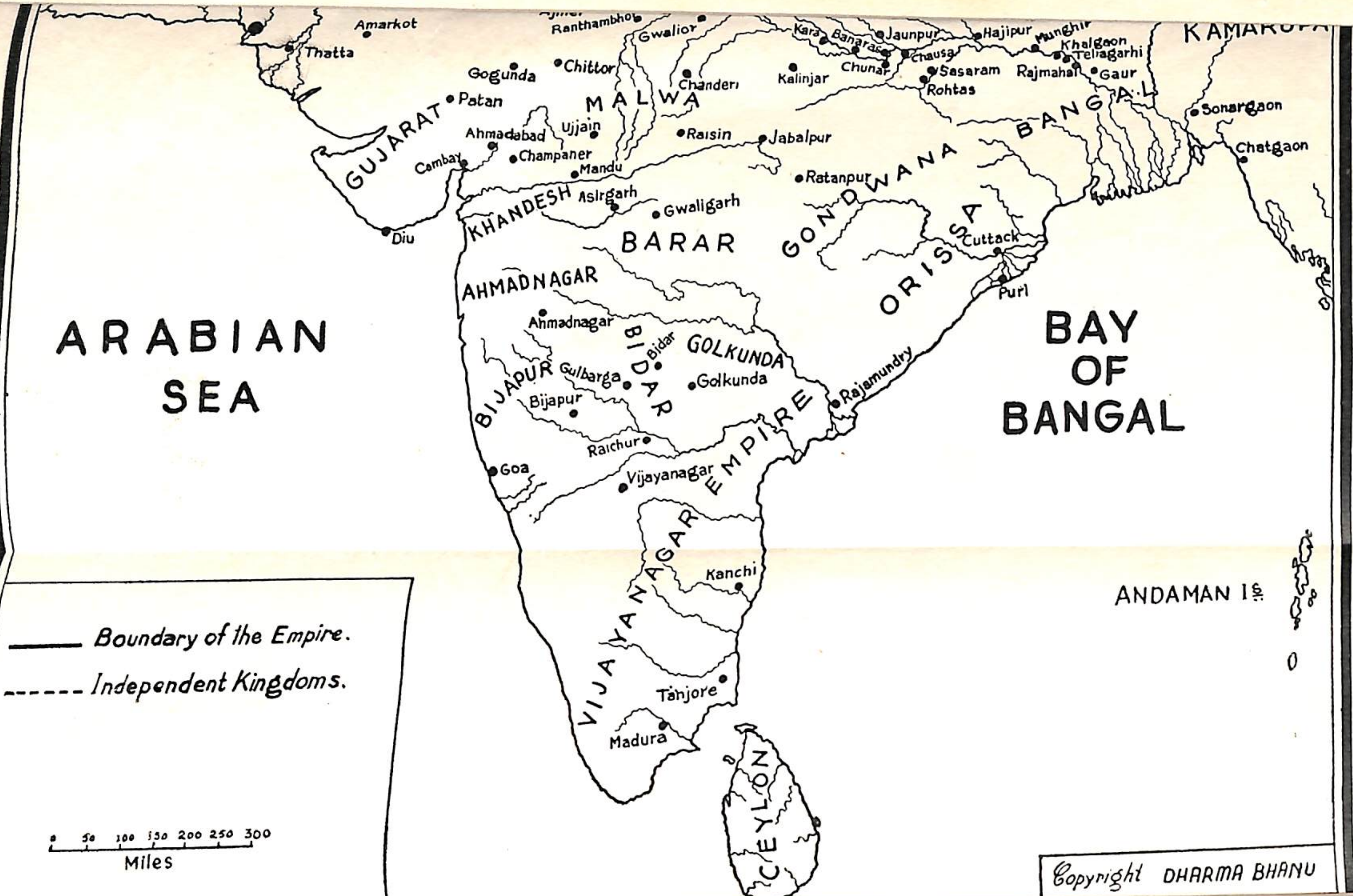
Khan. He wasted six precious months in the reduction of Chunargarh, whose occupation was immaterial, as it did not commanded important land routes. Moreover, the time gave Sher Khan an opportunity to conquer Gaur and to transfer its treasure to Rohtasgarh. Next, Humayun hesitated whether to stop short of the conquest of Chunargarh or to proceed against Sher Khan. He never really decided whether to conquer Bangal or to root out Sher Khan's power in Bihar. On proceeding to Gaur he again fell into sloth and pleasures and wasted more than eight months during which Sher Khan, who was a master of strategy, not only cut off the imperial communications with Agra, but occupied the country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj. One fails to imagine that there could be any monarch who would not receive news from his capital for eight months and yet think that all was safe. During his return march to Agra he displayed vacillation which was unworthy of a ruler of men. He did not know which way to take. He crossed the Ganga thrice and played into the hands of Sher Khan. At Chausa he committed the same blunder of not attacking Sher Khan while he was reported to be proceeding against the Hindu Cheros, as he had done while Bahadur Shah was besieging Chittor. Seventhly, after his defeat at Chausa in June 1539, he took no steps to recover from Sher Khan's hands his territory from Kanauj to Banaras and remained on the defensive at Agra. He treated the eastern parts of his empire as lost. The effect of this policy on the people must have been injurious to the extreme, and, in their eyes, Humayun's fate must have been sealed. Eighthly, he failed to keep together a force of experienced troops with which to fight the victorious Sher Khan and committed grievous mistakes at the battle of Kanauj. His choice of the low land for his encampment, his inaction on the field for two months, his faulty arrangement to shift his encampment to a better place, and, finally, his leaving his heavy artillery behind at the time of engagement and not preventing the stampede created by the crowding of the enormous number of non-combatants in his army were enough to account for his discomfiture and flight. Ninthly, all through his ten years' rule, he displayed lack of leadership and capacity to control his officers and troops. His generals and commanders rebelled again and again at critical moments in his fortune, feeling sure that their master would forgive them if it became necessary for them to revert to his service. Tenthly, his clemency towards his unworthy brothers was not a little responsible for his downfall. All the three of them rebelled, and sometime or other

assumed the insignia of royalty, and caused almost endless worry; but Humayun forgave them times out of number. Had he made them an example when they first became guilty of disloyalty, the troubles of his reign would not have occurred. Finally, as we have already seen, Humayun was incapable of concentrated effort. His habit was to show military activity and attain some success and then to fall into sloth and pleasures, and emerge from his slumber and, after an interval, fall into it again. This habit of working by fits and starts and burying himself in the *harem* or revelling at the table when he should have been on the saddle must be considered to be one of the foremost causes of his failure.

Humayun in exile, 1541-1555; Birth of Akbar, Oct. 15, 1542.

Passing through great privations during his journey from Khushab, Humayun reached Rohri on the left bank of the Indus and not far from the island fortress of Bhakkar. The place was included in the kingdom of Sindh whose ruler was Shah Husain Arghun. Humayun besieged the fortress, while Hindal and Yadgar Mirza pro- ceeded to capture Sehwan. The seige lingered on and the Mughuls had to suffer from acute distress, as Shah Husain had laid waste the country round Bhakkar so as to prevent Humayun from obtaining supplies. Disgusted with his brother's inactivity, Hindal besieged Sehwan and Humayun proceeded to join him there. While in Hin- dal's camp in 1541 he chanced to see Hamida Begam, the daughter of Hindal's spiritual preceptor, Mir Baba Dost *alias* Mir Ali Akbar Jami, who was a Persian Shia. He expressed his desire to marry her. Hindal took great offence at the proposal, as he looked upon the girl as his sister. Hamida Banu herself, then a girl of 14, showed great reluctance to marry the ex-king as, she said, her hand could hardly reach his collar. The ladies of the *harem*, however, successfully persuaded her and their marriage took place on August 29, 1541. Soon after Humayun had to return to Bhakkar and Hindal left for Kandhar. The fugitive emperor now made preparation to attack Thatta, Shah Husain's capital, but had to return from the way to re-besiege Sehwan. Anxious to sow dissension among the imperialists, Shah Husain won over Yadgar Nasir Mirza by promising him his daugther in marriage and his assistance in conquering Gujarat. In view of the successful diplomacy of the ruler of Sindh, Humayun had once again to abandon the siege of Sehwan and retreat towards Bhakkar. He found Yadgar Mirza absolutely hostile and, being despaired of his


INDIA IN 1556 A.D.
Humayun
Tashkent
Andijan
FARGHANA
Bukhara
Samarqand
TRANS-OXIANA
Hissar
Balkh
Qunduz
KHORASAN
Sar-i-pul
BADAKHSHAN
BAJAUR
SWAT
Herat
HAZARA
Kabul
Peshawar
KASHMIR
BALTISTAN
Srinagar
Attock
Ghazni
AFGHANISTAN
Kandahar
Rohtas
Sialkot
Bhera
Kalanaur
Lahore
Jalandar
PERSIA
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Multan
Ambala
Samana
Kalat
Panipat
Hisar
ARGHUNS
Delhi
Sambhal
Bhakkar
RAJASTHAN
MEWAT
Koil
Badaun
Bahraich
Agra
Khanua
Kanauj
Sehwan
Jaisalmer
Merta
Mandrail
Lucknow
Awadh
CHINA
TIBET



Amarkot
Thatta
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Kara
Banaras
Jaunpur
Hajipur
Munghir
Khalgaon
Teliagarhi
KAMARUPA
Gogunda
Chittor
Chanderi
Kalinjar
Chunar
Chausa
Sasaram
Rohtas
Rajmahal
Gaur
Patan
MALWA
Sonargaon
GUJARAT
Ahmadabad
Ujjain
Raisin
Jabalpur
BANGAL
Chatgaon
Cambay
Champaner
Mandu
Ratanpur
GONDWANA
KHANDESH
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Diu
BARAR
ORISSA
Cuttack
Puri
AHMADNAGAR
Ahmadnagar
BIDAR
Bidar
GOLKUNDA
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
BIJAPUR
Gulbarga
Golkunda
Rajamundry
Bijapur
Raichur
Goa
Vijayanagar
EMPIRE
VIJAYANAGAR
Kanchi
ANDAMAN Is.
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.
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Miles
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future, he talked of withdrawing himself from the world and going on a pilgrimage to Mecca.

At this time he decided to accept an invitation from Maldeva of Marwar who had promised him assistance about a year back. Accordingly, Humayun started for Jodhpur; but, as he reached the vicinity of the capital of Marwar, he found that Maldeva had changed his attitude and wanted to arrest and deliver him to Sher Shah who had probably written to the raja to do him that service. So he retraced his steps back to Sindh suffering unspeakable hardship and privation on the way during the hottest season in the desert of Rajasthan. On one occasion his men had to march for three days without water and when they reached a well many of his horses and men drank so much that they died. He took shelter with the Rana of Amarkot, a small state of Sodha Rajputs, in Sindh (August 22, 1542), who offered him hospitality and help with men and money to conquer the south-eastern part of Sindh. Rana Virasala (not Prasad as is wrongly supposed by many writers) allowed the Mughul ladies to be lodged in his palace fort. In October, Humayun proceeded to conquer Sindh with the help of Rana Virasala and he had covered about 15 miles when he received the happy news of the birth of a son at Amarkot. The baby was the future Akbar the Great. Humayun gave him the name of Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar. He was at this time in such a destitute condition that he could not celebrate the occasion with befitting splendour and give presents to his nobles. He failed to capture Sindh either. What was worse, he lost the support of his new ally, as his haughty followers picked a quarrel with Rana Virasala's men. But, fortunately, Shah Husain Arghun, desirous of getting rid of the embarassing presence of a hungry invader, offered him a passage through his country to Kandhar and provided him with supplies and money for the journey. So Humayun now quitted India for good. But Kamran, who was ruling as an independent king with Askari as governor of Kandhar on his behalf, sent a force to obstruct his passage and arrest him. Humayun had a narrow escape and was obliged to leave behind his infant son, Akbar, then aged about one year, in the hurry of his flight. Avoiding Kandhar, he reached Persia, where Shah Tahmasp offered him a splendid reception. But the bigoted ruler of Iran wanted his guest to conform to the Shia faith and used veiled threats of violence if he refused to comply with his demand. Humayun bore the humiliating treatment with patience. At last, in 1544, the Shah assisted him

with an army on the condition that he should become a Shia, encourage that religion in his territories and return Kandhar to Iran in the event of his successful acquisition of that fortress. At the head of this army Humayun reached Kandhar, defeated Askari and captured the fort. Askari was forgiven and Kandhar was made over to the Persians. But on the death of the Persian Shah Humayun re-occupied Kandhar and set out to besiege Kabul. Kabul was occupied and he met his two-years old son in November 1544. Kamran fled to Ghazni and from there to Sindh.

The successful occupation of Kandhar and Kabul gave Humayun a footing in Afghanistan, but the days of his trouble were not yet over. Taking advantage of Humayun's illness during an expedition to the country beyond the Hindukush, Kamran surprised Kabul and took possession of it in 1546. Many of Humayun's men now deserted him to join Kamran, fearing that he would massacre their families in Kabul. On recovery from illness, Humayun besieged Kabul. It is said that Kamran exposed infant Akbar on the city rampart to the fire of Humayun's guns. But the siege was pressed with vigour and Kabul re-captured in 1547, Kamran fleeing away to escape punishment. He returned and fought again with his brother, but was again defeated and had to submit (1548). Humayun again forgave him and appointed him governor of the country north of the Oxus. In 1549, Kamran once again played false to his brother and actually re-occupied Kabul. Humayun, who was severely wounded in the battle with his brother, had to take refuge in a secluded place and was even believed to have died. With the help of Sulaiman of Badakhshan, he, however, took the field again, defeated Kamran and took possession of Kabul. Kamran, who fled and escaped to take shelter with Islam Shah (1545-1553) in our country, was captured and surrendered to Humayun, who, in spite of the advice of his nobles to put him to death, forgave his brother, but ordered him to be blinded. Kamran was now abandoned by his followers and, accompanied by his faithful wife, he started on a pilgrimage to Mecca where he died in 1557. Humayun's other brothers had already disappeared. After his last battle with Kamran, Askari was taken prisoner and sent on to Mecca from where he never returned. Hindal was killed in a night attack by an Afghan. Thus Humayun was free from his dangerous rivals who had been an important cause of his expulsion and misery.

Restoration of Humayun.

During his exile, his great rival Sher Shah, who had expelled him from India and established a vast and powerful empire strengthened by a wise system of administration, had died in May 1545. He was succeeded by his son, Islam Shah, who maintained Sher Shah's admirable policy of cherishing the well-being of the people, but could not keep his Afghan nobles in check. When he died a premature death on 30th October, 1553, the Afghan empire was well on the way to decay. His twelve year old son was murdered by the boy's maternal uncle, Mubariz Khan, who set him self up as king under the title of Muhammad Adil Shah, popularly known as Adil. This man was fond of ease and sensual pleasures. Being averse to dull details of administration, he left the charge of affairs in the hands of his Hindu minister, Hemu, and himself retired to Chunar. Adil Shah's authority was challenged by two members of the Sur ruling family, named Ibrahim Shah and Sikandar Shah, who fought a number of fiercely-contested battles among themselves. The break-up of the Afghan empire, created by the valour, wisdom and statesmanship of Sher Shah, was thus only a question of time. Humayun was watching the distracted condition of our country and was eagerly awaiting an opportunity to return and make a bid for the recovery of his lost dominion. The opportunity came within a year of Islam Shah's death. A believer in astrology, one day he took omen from the names of the first three men he met, which was re-enforced by another omen taken from the poems of Hafiz. They were so favourable as to confirm his decision to embark on the re-conquest of Hindustan. As he had got rid of the embarrassing presence of his faithless brothers and consolidated his position in Afghanistan, there was nothing to hinder his projected enterprise. Preparations were quickly made, and leaving Kabul he reached Peshawar on December 25, 1554. When he crossed the Indus he was joined by Bairam Khan, the most faithful of his officers, and by many other commanders from Kandhar. Negotiations had been going on with the Gakkhar chief, Sultan Adam, for securing his co-operation and assistance, but the latter, who had already entered into an alliance with Sikandar Shah Sur, declined the offer. Proceeding by way of Parhala, Humayun reached Kalanaur, in the Gurdaspur district in East Panjab. Here he divided his army into three divisions, sending one under Saihab-ud-din Khan to Lahore, and a second one under Bairam Khan and some other chiefs against Nasib Khan, an Afghan, who held Hariana. Lahore was occupied without resistance

and Humayun reached the place a few days later (February 24, 1555) and made arrangements for the administration of the town and the district. Next, Dipalpur was occupied in March after a fierce fighting with Shahbaz Khan Afghan. At about the same time Bairam Khan occupied the pargana of Hariana after driving away Nasib Khan. He then marched to Jalandar. From Jalandar, Bairam Khan and some other notable Mughuls proceeded to Machhiwara on the Sutlaj, 19 miles east of Ludhiana. Here a tough battle was fought between the Mughuls and the Afghans who were under the command of Nasib Khan, Tatar Khan and some other notable chiefs, on May 15, 1555, and lasted till past mid-night. Fortunately, a fire broke out near the Afghan camp which made it possible for the Mughuls to see the disposition of the Afghan troops and to make them a sure target of their guns and arrows. In spite of their desperate resistance, the Afghan ranks broke up in the early hours of the morning and fled from the field. Bairam Khan quickly made arrangements for the occupation of Sarhind.

The battle of Machhiwara enabled the Mughuls to occupy almost the whole of the Panjab. This frightened Sikandar Sur, one of the three Sur kings who claimed supremacy in Hindustan. He collected eighty thousand troops and advanced from Delhi on April 27, 1555, to recover Sarhind. As the contest was likely to be fateful, Humayun, in response to Bairam Khan's request, proceeded from Lahore to join his troops. A sanguinary conflict now took place near Sarhind on 22nd June, 1555. The Mughuls were at first frightened by the imposing army of Sikandar which was headed by mountain-like elephants. But Bairam Khan's generalship enabled them to emerge victorious. Sikandar, too, was repulsed. He escaped to Mankot and from there to the hills of the north-western Panjab. After this memorable victory, Humayun entered Sarhind and from there proceeded to Samana where he spent a few days. Then he advanced to Delhi where he reached on July 20, 1555. He entered the city at an auspicious moment on 23rd July and re-occupied the throne of Delhi after an interval of about 15 years. The emperor had already sent a small force from Sarhind to pursue Sikandar Sur. He now appointed his young son, Akbar, who, a little time before, had been designated heir-apparent, governor of the Panjab, with Bairam Khan, his tutor, to assist him. This step was necessary in order to put down Sikandar Sur whose army had swelled and who was carrying on depredations in

the Panjab. Ali Quli Khan Shaibani was despatched to Badaun to suppress a local rebel, named Qambar Beg, which task he performed without much difficulty. Arrangements were made for the occupation of Agra and the adjoining districts. Thus, within a few months, Humayun recovered a considerable part of the territory which had once been under his sway.

Last days and death.

The magnitude of the task before the restored monarch was great. He had recovered only a part of his dominion. Even in the limited territory under his control there were a number of disaffected chiefs, mostly Afghans, who had to be subdued. The most difficult work was that of establishing a sound system of administration and winning the sympathy of the people. Humayun engaged himself in the work of putting down refractory chiefs and of making arrangements for the restoration of the Mughul authority; but he took no steps to revive the sound administrative machinery of the time of Sher Shah which had partly been broken down owing to the factious fights of his successors and partly due to the Mughul invasion of India. His end was approaching fast. On the evening of 24th January, 1556, he was sitting on the roof of his library situated in that group of the building known as *Din Panah* and was subsequently called *Sher Mandal.* He was talking to some of his distinguished nobles and astrologers and it was arranged to hold a *darbar* at the time of the appearance of the planet Venus. At this time he heard the *Muazzin's* call to prayer from the neighbouring mosque. So he got up in order to descend the steep stairs and go to attend the evening prayer. His staff slipped and he fell down the stairs and fractured his skull. He was then carried to the palace. On recovering consciousness he learnt that his condition was serious and so sent a message to his son, Akbar, informing him of his condition and appointing him his successor. He died on January 26, 1556. Thus, as Lane-Poole writes, " Humayun tumbled through life, and he tumbled out of it."

Character.

There are no two opinions about Humayun as a gentleman. All the modern as well as contemporary historians agree that as a man his character left little to be desired. He was an extremely dutiful son, never hesitating in carrying out his father's commands both in the latter's life-time and after his death. Babur's last words of advice kept

ringing in his ears and he so faithfully obeyed them that he risked his throne and his very life more than once in order not to do to his unworthy brothers any harm even though they deserved it. He was equally devoted to his mother, Mahim Begam, and was very affectionate to his numerous relatives, male and female. Though polygamous, he was passionately attached to his wives and he loved his children, particularly Akbar, as dearly as any father could ever do. Despite constant rebellions on the part of his near relatives and kinsmen like Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza and their numerous progeny, he sincerely forgave them again and again and appointed them to places of emolument, trust and responsibility. Like his father, he freely associated with his officials and servants and tried to share their joys and sorrows. He was fond of the company of learned men with whom he discoursed on diverse subjects of cultural and religious interests. A man of scholarly taste and well-versed in Turki and Persian literatures, philosophy, mathematics and astronomy, besides Muslim theology, he gathered round him scholars of repute and extended to them whatever patronage he could. It must, however, be noted that as a scholar Humayun was not so exact and precise as Babur. He was a little careless in his spelling and style and seems to have been also fond of rhetorical and ambiguous language. This habit seems to have stuck to him till very late in life. Nevertheless, he was a thoroughly cultured gentleman, very polite and attentive in conversation and quite charming in manners and elegant in bearing. As Farishta writes, he was "of elegant stature and of a bronze complexion. The mildness and benevolence of Humayun's character were excessive, if there can be excess in such noble qualities." He "possessed the virtues of charity and munificence in a very high degree."

Humayun was a sincere Musalman, though not of the orthodox Sunni type, and was regular in the observance of the five daily prayers and other rites of his religion. Like his father, he was free from sectarian bigotry and cherished little ill-will towards the Shias. His chief queen, Hamida Banu Begam was a Shia and so also his most faithful and best servant, Bairam Khan. Contrary to the practice of the age, he refused to indulge in the persecution of heresy in Islam and conformed, while in Persia, to the practices of the Shia religion, though not without considerable reluctance and mental reservation. But as far as his relations with the Hindus were concerned, he did not rise above the standard of the age. Notwithstanding the so-called advice

of Babur in the fictitious Bhupal document to extend complete religious toleration to the Hindus and to prohibit cow slaughter, Humayun acted like a sultan of the pre-Mughul age in regard to the religion of the vast majority of his Hindu subjects. He displayed definite partiality for his co-religionists and although it proved to be highly injurious to his interests, he always refused to attack a brother-in-faith engaged in war with the Hindus. He demolished temples at Kalinjar and did not refrain from hurting the susceptibility of the Hindus. But he was not a bitter persecutor and he followed no systematic policy of repression of Hinduism.

Endowed with considerable physical prowess, Humayun was not a bad soldier. He was courageous in battle and often risked his life on the field. Very patient in times of crisis, he could endure any amount of fatigue and hardship and even suffering. He was a noted strategist; but he could not be compared with his father or his rival, Sher Shah. He was not a good general and was not possessed of the personal magnetism of a great leader of men. Those very officers and troops who followed Babur from victory to victory and were held in thraldom to his will revolted again and again against Humayun. The Mughul army, which had proved its undoubted superiority in the time of Babur, became a weak instrument of force and was torn by dissension throughout the reign of Humayun who failed to make proper use of the Mughul system of fighting and to inspire his troops to action. As a commander, he hardly took advantage of the weakness and difficulties of his opponents and invariably gave them an opportunity to get together the sinews of war against him.

Nor could Humayun be called a good administrator or even ruler. Positively lacking in constructive statesmanship, he could never think of establishing a sound system of administration in the territories under his control. It is sometimes presumed that he had little time to introduce administrative reforms, but that is a fallacious view. Before his deposition and expulsion he ruled for almost ten years during which he did next to nothing to improve the moral, social and even material condition of the people. The truth is that he had no ability and aptitude for a work of this type. After his restoration during about one year's rule he made no preliminary arrangement to revive the good institutions of Sher Shah's time. The few regulations that he devised during his reign were puerile. The division of his nobility and officials

into three classes, entitled the *Ahl-i-Daulat*, the *Ahl-i-Saadat* and *Ahl-i-Murad* was arbitrary and meaningless and served no useful administrative purpose. According to another writer, he classified his official hierarchy into 12 divisions, each class being indicated by an arrow, which was even more fanciful. Another innovation was his dressing himself in different coloured robes each day of the week, for example, on Sunday he would put on yellow dress, on Saturday black, on Monday white and so on. This seems to have been based on some astronomical considerations, but had no connection with administration. A number of other fanciful innovations are on record in the pages of the contemporary works, but no writer ascribes to him any solid reform in the field of revenue or any other administrative branch. His main faults as a ruler were the facts that he had no well-thought-out scheme for anything and had the habit of abandoning a project and undertaking a new one without bringing the first one to a successful conclusion. In fact, the dull details of government repelled him. Though it may sound strange, yet it is a fact that Humayun as a ruler lacked the sense of responsibility. His conception of kingship differed radically from that of Sher Shah who believed that a ruler's main duty was to further the interests of his subjects. Humayun could not maintaindis - cipline among his officials and troops and as a ruler he could not expect from them that obedience which his father, Babur, easily did and without which no government could be carried on successfully. His besetting sin was his indolence and his habit of falling into sloth and pleasures at intervals. Next to it were his indecision and lack of balance and proportion. He would waver long between opposing courses of action and he went to the extent of placing the ever-bearer, Nizam, who had saved his life at Chausa on his throne for a day. His considerable natural talent was greatly undermined by his addiction to opium and by sensual indulgence. His over-generosity and leniency towards his brothers and relatives, whom he forgave again and again, proved to be impediments in the way of orderly and disciplined government.

Though his name was Humayun, which means lucky, he was, in fact, a very unlucky monarch. In spite of his essential goodness, generosity and goodwill towards all, he failed as a ruler. It was, however, fortunate that he succeeded in recovering the crown of Delhi at the fag end of his life, without which he would not have had any real claim to an important place in the history of our country. It was even more fortunate that he had a son like Akbar who, by conquering most parts of

the sub-continent of India and giving it one of the best systems of administration then known to the world, perpetuated the name of Humayun and of the Mughul dynasty in the land.

BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING

1. *Memoirs of Babur*, translated by Mrs. A.S. Beveridge.

2. *Humayun-nama* by Gulbadan Begam, translated into English by A.S. Beveridge.

3. *Tazkirat-ul-Waqayat* by Jauhar, translated by C. Stewart.

4. Elliot and Dawson, Vol. V.

5. *History of India under Babur and Humayun*, Vol. II, by W. Erskine.

6. *Humayun Badshah*, Volumes I and II by S.K. Banerji.

7. *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, Chapter II.

8. *Humayun in Persia* by Sukumar Ray.

9. *Humayun and His Times* by Ishwari Prasad.

CHAPTER IV

SHER SHAH SUR

The reign of Humayun is broken into two by an interlude of about fifteen years during which the Sur dynasty founded by the great Afghan monarch, Sher Shah, established its domination over most parts of northern India. The interlude is important for two reasons. Firstly, it was the last time that an Afghan dynasty sat on the throne of Delhi and ruled over north India from that central town. Secondly, the dynasty revived and reformed the old system of administration in the country and gave her peace, order and prosperity. This constituted a priceless legacy to Humayun's successors.

Sher Shah, the formidable rival of Humayun, was a man of humble origin. Farid, as he was originally called, was the grandson of Ibrahim Sur, a native of the mountainous region of Roh near Peshawar on the banks of the river Gomal. Ibrahim traded in horses; but, as he could not succeed in his business, he migrated to our country in search of employment, during the early years of the reign of Bahlol Lodi. Both Ibrahim Sur and his son, Hasan, entered the service of Mahabat Khan Sur and Daud Khan Sahukhail, the jagirdars of Hariana and Bakhala (Bhakra ?) in the Hoshiarpur district of the Panjab. The father and the son settled at Bajwara, two miles south-east of Hoshiarpur. It was here that Farid was born to a wife of Hasan Khan in 1472.* Sometime after Farid's birth Ibrahim and Hasan took up service under Jamal Khan Sarangkhani of Hisar and Umar Khan Sarwani the Khan-i-Alam, respectively. Later on, Hasan went over to the service of Jamal Khan. When the latter was transferred to Jaunpur by Sikandar Lodi, he conferred the jagir of the parganas of Sasaram, Khawaspur and Tanda on Hasan who had come over to Bihar along with his new master. It was at Sasaram on the river Son that Farid spent the early years of his youth.

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*This date was known to the 19th century writers, such as Bhartendu Harish Chandra and Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Dr. Qanungo, however, gives 1486.

Though a capable soldier, Hasan was a failure in the management of his household. He had married four wives and had eight sons. Farid and Nizam were the sons by his first wife and Sulaiman and Ahmad were born of the youngest wife. This youngest wife seems to have been a concubine. Hasan was greatly under her influence and bestowed his attention on her to the neglect of his elder wife. Consequently, Farid's boyhood must have been far from happy. His father neglected him, while his step-mother was jealous of him. In 1494, at the age of 22, he decided to leave Sasaram and to make a career for himself somewhere else. Those days Jaunpur was an important centre of Islamic learning and culture and was spoken of as the 'Shiraz of India'. Farid made his way to this seat of learning and there he devoted himself to the study of Arabic and Persian languages and literatures. He read Arabic grammar and the well-known Persian works—the *Gulistan*, the *Bostan* and the *Sikandarnama*. He was a student of uncommon ability and hence attracted the attention of many people, specially Jamal Khan, the patron of his father, who effected a reconciliation between the father and son and persuaded Hasan to appoint Farid the manager of the former's jagir.

Manager of his father's jagir.

On his return from Jaunpur, Farid devoted his energies to the administration of his father's jagir with ability and vigilance for about 21 years (1497-1518). This was the period of Farid's training in administration. He suppressed the rebellious zamindars, kept the civil and military officers under strict control, and gave peace to the people. His chief work at this time was the establishment of a good revenue system based on the measurement and classification of the land and the ascertainment of its actual produce. He took special care to protect the interests of the peasants and punished the unscrupulous revenue officials. His aim was to administer justice to all and in this he showed no concession to the unruly Afghan soldiers. Little did he realise that he was preparing himself as an apprentice for his future role as a mighty ruler of northern India.

The successful administration of Farid, however, roused the jealousy of his step-mother and, in 1518, again drove him from his father's house. He reached the court of Sultan Ibrahim Lodi and requested him to order the grant of his father's jagir to him. But the sultan of Delhi did not form a good opinion of a young man who

complained against his own father, and did not grant his request. It so happened that Hasan died soon after this incident and Ibrahim had no objection to entertain Farid's request. He conferred on him the jagir of Sasaram, Khawaspur and Tanda. The ambitious youth returned to South Bihar with the royal *farman* and settled down at Sasaram sometime about 1520 or 1521.

In the service of Sultan Muhammad of South Bihar; a period of adversity.

The grant of his father's jagir by Ibrahim, however, did not settle the dispute about succession and Farid could not enjoy the jagir for long. Sulaiman, his step-brother, who was in charge of the jagir during the later days of his father's life, sought the intercession of Muhammad Khan Sur of Chaund (modern Chainpur) in the Shahabad district in Bihar. Muhammad Khan was not on good terms with Hasan. He took this opportunity of profiting by the quarrel among the brothers and proposed a division of the jagir between Farid and Sulaiman. But Farid refused to partition it, as it had been granted to him by Ibrahim Lodi. A far-sighted man, he took up service under Bahar Khan Lohani, the ruler of South Bihar and thus secured a powerful patron for his claims (1522). His services pleased Bahar Khan who conferred upon him the title of Sher Khan for killing a tiger single-handed in a hunting expedition. Very soon afterwards he was promoted to be the tutor of his master's young son, Jalal Khan. A little later, he was raised to be deputy-governor of South Bihar.

Sher Khan's rapid rise excited the jealousy of the Lohani and other Pathan nobles of South Bihar. When Sher Khan was absent from the court in order to attend to some matters in his jagir, one of his rivals poisoned the ears of Bahar Khan. The time was a critical one, particularly for the Afghans whose king, Ibrahim Lodi, had just been defeated and killed at the battle of Panipat and the sovereignty of Hindustan had passed to the Mughuls under Babur. Bahar Khan, who had set himself up as an independent king, styling himself as Sultan Muhammad Shah, was gathering men and following a cautious policy of wait and see. Sher Khan's enemies represented to Muhammad Shah that Sher Khan was planning to join Mahmud Lodi, the brother of Ibrahim, who was trying to revive the Afghan power at Delhi. This was against the interests of Muhammad Shah

as well, as he would have to accept Mahmud Lodi as his suzerain. Consequently, Sultan Muhammad appointed Muhammad Khan Sur of Chaund an arbiter to settle the dispute between Sher Khan and Sulaiman. Sher Khan again refused to partition the jagir and insisted on retaining the whole of his patrimony. On behalf of Sulaiman, Muhammad Khan Sur took forcible possession of the parganas and drove Sher Khan out of his home. Once again Sher Khan became a fugitive, wandering in search of employment. His only hope was to secure the help of Babur, who had established his empire in northern India, and get back his jagir from the jealous hands of Muhammad Khan Sur. With this intention he contacted Junaid Barlas, the Mughul governor of Kara and Manikpur, and through him secured a post in the Mughul service, in April 1527. When Babur undertook a campaign against the Afghans of Bihar, Sher Khan rendered useful service and his jagir was restored to him in March 1528. He was diplomatic and just enough to win the gratitude of his former enemy, Muhammad Khan Sur, by restoring to him Chaund which had been occupied by the Mughul troops during their campaign in Bihar.

Deputy-governor of Bihar.

During his short stay with the Mughuls Sher Khan had discovered some glaring defects in their administration and military organisation and felt that it was not impossible for the Afghans to recover their lost dominion. He was also struck by the vanity of the Mughuls who derided all non-Mughuls. He left the Mughul service towards the end of 1528 and returned to Bihar, not to unite the Afghans against Babur, as some modern writers have supposed, but because he could not pull on with them (Mughuls). Once again he went to the court of Sultan Muhammad of South Bihar and was re-appointed tutor and guardian of his son, Jalal Khan. Very soon after this, Sultan Muhammad died (1528), leaving Jalal Khan a minor. His widow, Dudu Bibi, became regent of the new sultan. She appointed Sher Khan her deputy or *vakil*. As deputy-governor, Sher Khan re-organised the administration, purged the army of its defects and strengthened his own position by loyal and devoted service to his young sovereign. At the same time he was not oblivious of his own interests and gathered around him a band of tried and faithful Afghan followers, mostly of the Sur clan, who were always ready to sacrifice their all for his sake.

Within one year, however, Sher Khan's fortune again met with a setback (1529). Mahmud Lodi, the younger brother of Ibrahim Lodi, appeared in Bihar at the invitation of some prominent Afghan nobles of that province. After the defeat of Rana Sangram Singh, on whose side he had fought at Khanua in March 1527, he had retired to Mewar, but had not given up his pretensions to the sovereignty of Hindustan. On his arrival the Afghan leaders put their heads together and evolved a plan of action against the Mughuls. Practically all the Afghans rallied under the banner of Mahmud Lodi who took over the government of South Bihar from the boy-sultan, Jalal Khan, promising to restore the province to him after the Afghan victory against their common foe, Babur.

Sher Khan, however, was well aware of the incompetence of Mahmud Lodi and the jealousy and discord among his principal followers. He showed little enthusiasm for the Afghan cause under the leadership of Mahmud, and retired to his jagir on the pretext of making preparations for the proposed expedition. In fact, he did not want to be hostile towards Babur, at least for the time being, and did his best to suppress his real feelings. But Mahmud Lodi, who wanted the co-operation of all important Afghan leaders in this 'national' enterprise, insisted on Sher Khan's adhesion to the cause. He decided to march his force by way of Sasaram in order to persuade Sher Khan to join the Afghan army along with his followers. Sher Khan hesitated in the beginning, but after a second thought accorded Mahmud a royal reception and joined him with a contingent of his troops. In the initial stages of the war the Afghans were very successful. They proceeded to Ghazipur and also captured Banaras; but on the arrival of the Mughul forces they became panicky, gave up the enterprise and Mahmud Lodi fled without fighting a single pitched battle. Many of the notable Afghan chiefs, including Sher Khan, submitted to Babur. Jalal Khan, the boy-sultan of South Bihar, who had taken refuge in Bangal on the appearance of Mahmud Lodi, came back to Bihar and waited on Babur on May 16, 1529. He was restored to the greater portion of his kingdom on agreeing to pay to Babur an annual tribute. Sher Khan, too, was restored to his jagir and became a Mughul vassal.

Dudu Bibi, the mother of Jalal Khan, once again invited Sher Khan and re-appointed him guardian of her son and also

deputy-governor of Bihar, as before, after the restoration of Jalal Khan and the return of Babur to Agra. Being situated between two powerful kingdoms of Bangal and Delhi, South Bihar was in a constant danger of being drawn into a quarrel between these two and thus falling a prey to their aggression. Moreover, its administration and economy had suffered greatly, as it was compelled to become a theatre of war between Mahmud Lodi and Babur. Dudu Bibi rightly believed that a wise and experienced administrator of the calibre of Sher Khan alone could restore South Bihar to its former prosperity. After his appointment Sher Khan applied himself heart and soul to the task of rehabilitating the province and improving its administration. Dudu Bibi died shortly after and Sher Khan became the virtual head of the government of South Bihar, while Jalal Khan was still a minor and a titular ruler. Under these circumstances, Sher Khan got a good opportunity of strengthening his hold upon the army, and won it over to his cause. He appointed his trusted followers to the key positions in both civil and military administration and took steps to increase his power and prestige in every way possible.

One of the most pressing problems facing South Bihar was the adjustment of its relations with Nusrat Shah of Bangal (1518-33), who wanted to extend his dominion at the expense of his neighbour. Sher Khan realised that he must find out some ally to counterbalance the danger from the side of Bangal. He cultivated friendly relations with Makhdum-i-Alam, the brother-in-law of Nusrat Shah and his governor of Hajipur, who was on bad terms with his master. Sher Khan decided to use him as a counter-poise against Nusrat Shah. This roused the hostility of Nusrat Shah and he attacked his brother-in-law and killed him. Sher Khan, thereupon, appropriated the huge treasure hoarded by Makhdum-i-Alam. Flushed with his recent victory over Makhdum, Nusrat Shah invaded South Bihar, but he was badly defeated by Sher Khan in 1529. This victory over a powerful neighbour greatly enhanced Sher Khan's reputation and prestige. But, at the same time, it roused the jealousy of the Lohani nobles who could not tolerate the domination of one whom they looked upon as a mere servant of their chief. They poisoned Jalal Khan's ears and turned him against Sher Khan. Next, they hatched a plot to murder Sher Khan; but the conspiracy failed due to the latter's vigilance. Finding a large party against him, Sher Khan

decided to share power with the Lohanis; but his proposal was rejected. On the contrary, the Lohanis invited Nusrat Shah of Bangal to assist them in snatching power from the hands of Sher Khan. Unable even to do this, the Lohani leaders with their minor sultan, Jalal Khan, fled to Nusrat Shah and took refuge in Bangal.

With the desertion of the boy-sultan Sher Khan became the virtual king of South Bihar, without a titular superior with pretensions to control his actions. But Sher Khan refrained from assuming any regal title and contented himself with the lesser designation of *Hazrat-i-Ala*. He strengthened his position both financially and militarily by acquiring the strong fortress of Chunar as a result of his marriage with Lad Malika, the widow of Taj Khan, a former governor of the place. By this union Sher Khan profited in two ways: he acquired an impregnable fortress and also got an immense treasure which was found buried there. These achievements whetted his appetite and soared his ambition. Now he began dreaming of acting as an independent ruler and giving effect to his schemes of self-aggrandisement.

Early conflict with Humayun.

Despite these successes, Sher Khan's rise to power was not to be an easy one. Very soon he met with a misfortune which brought about a temporary suspension of his lofty schemes. Although his principal Lohani rivals were now refugees in Bangal and he was the king of South Bihar in all but name and was doing everything in his power to unite the Indian Afghans and to improve their material and moral conditions he had a hostile element within his own race to contend with. Sher Khan had risen from a low station in life to the exalted status of the monarch of a kingdom. This could not be tolerated by some of the important Afghan officials of the province who looked upon him as an upstart. In 1530 these dissatisfied officials invited Mahmud Lodi, who was passing his days as a refugee since his defeat at the battle of Ghaghara. He accepted their invitation and came to Bihar. The time was proptitious for a fresh Afghan attempt for driving the Mughuls out and regaining their supremacy in Hindustan. Humayun, the heir-apparent to the Mughul throne, was lying seriously ill at Agra. Though his life was saved by Babur's sacrifice, the founder of the Mughul empire departed from this world towards the end of December 1530. The Indian

Afghans were eager to turn their enemy's difficulties to their advantage. On Mahmud Lodi's arrival, Sher Khan was compelled to retire to his jagir, as he did not like to play a second fiddle to this Lodi pretender. The latter tried to win him over and went to the extent of promising him in writing that the whole of South Bihar would be restored to him as soon as Mahmud Lodi had acquired success against the Mughuls and become master of some territory elsewhere. He paid a visit to Sher Khan in the latter's jagir and persuaded him to co-operate with him and make united attack on the Mughuls. Though unwillingly, Sher Khan at last gave his assent to the plan and became a member of this Afghan confederacy.

After many months' preparations a campaign was now organised. Under the lead of Mahmud the Afghans occupied Banaras and marched on Jaunpur. Junaid Barlas, the Mughul governor, abandoned his post and retreated towards Agra. The emboldened Afghans now marched upon Lucknow and captured it. At this time Humayun was busy in his siege of Kalinjar. Hearing of the reverses suffered by his army, he patched up a hasty peace with the raja of that place and marched eastwards to check the advance of the Afghans. The two armies faced each other at Daunrua in the Nawabganj tahsil of the present Barabanki district in Awadh and a well-contested battle was fought there in August 1532, in which the Afghans were badly defeated. Their leader, Mahmud Lodi, fled to Orissa and he spent the rest of his life there, dying in 1542. Sher Khan had been an unwilling co-operator in this Afghan enterprise. He recovered South Bihar on the failure of the uprising and again became its ruler.

Humayun did not return to Agra immediately after his easy victory over Mahmud Lodi at Daunrua. He besieged the fortress of Chunargarh, which Sher Khan had obtained by his marriage with Lad Malika in 1530, and garrisoned it with his trustworthy soldiers. When the Mughul forces appeared in the vicinity of the fort, Sher Khan placed it in the charge of his second son, Jalal Khan, and himself withdrew into the interior of Bihar. The Mughul siege of Chunargarh lasted for four months (September to December, 1532). It was not an easy task for Humayun to reduce Jalal Khan to submission. Circumstances helped Sher Khan greatly to defy the Mughul arms. Soon after he had laid siege, Humayun received

the alarming news of the hostile movements of Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, who was preparing to have a trial of strength with the Mughuls. Under these circumstances, Humayun decided to make a hurried peace, as he had done with the raja of Kalinjar. He agreed to allow Sher Khan to remain in possession of the fortress of Chunar on the latter's agreeing to place a contingent of 500 troops, commanded by his third son, Qutub Khan, for service in the Mughul army. These terms were acceptable to both and hence a peace was made and in January 1533, Humayun returned to Agra in order to settle his scores with Bahadur Shah.

Contest with Bangal, 1533-37.

Sher Khan returned to South Bihar from the vicinity of Chunar after the departure of Humayun for Agra. During the siege of Chunar the king of Bangal had displayed consistent hostility towards Bihar. Now Sher Khan decided to retaliate and with that purpose started preparations for an invasion of Bangal. He strengthened his army and, summoning the Afghans from the various parts of India and specially from the north-western parts and from Roh, gave them employment and whatever salaries they demanded. When his preparations were complete, he proceeded in 1533 against the new king of Bangal, Ghiyas-ud-Din Mahmud. He threw up earthen redoubts even on the way and thus secured himself from being caught unawares. The Bangal army was led by Ibrahim Khan, son of Qutub Khan, an eminent commander of his day. The two armies faced each other at Surajgarh and a severe battle was fought there in 1534. By a clever stratagem Sher Khan lured the Bangal forces into an ambush and inflicted a severe defeat on them. The Bangal army suffered a great loss and thousands of its soldiers were slaughtered, as if, in cold blood. The result of the battle of Surajgarh was what Sher Khan had anticipated. "The whole of the treasures, elephants and a train of artillery (of the Bangal army) fell into the hands of Sher Khan, who was, thus, supplied with munitions of war and became master of the kingdom of Bihar and much other territory besides." Indeed, the battle of Surajgarh marked a turning point in his career. It gave rise to new and greater ambitions in his heart and opened the prospects of a bright future before him.

The victory of Surajgarh whetted Sher Khan's appetite for further conquests. He followed up his success by invading Bangal

once again, while Humayun was busy in his campaign against Bahadur Shah of Gujarat. Sher Khan repeatedly defeated Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud and occupied the latter's territory west of the Teliagarhi pass. Hard pressed and harassed by the relentless aggrandisement of Sher Khan, the king of Bangal was compelled to seek the help of the Portuguese of Chinsura. The combined forces of Bangal and the Portuguese took prompt measures to defend the Teliagarhi and Sikrigali passes. But Sher Khan was too clever for the allies. Avoiding the passes, he cleverly worked round the allies, flank, and reaching Gaur, the capital of Bangal, threatened it in 1536. The Portuguese allies of Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud could be of no help. He had no other alternative but to enter into negotiations for peace and purchase a temporary immunity from attack from Sher Khan by surrendering to him gold worth thirteen lakhs of rupees.

The peace gave Mahmud only a temporary respite, for Sher Khan was fired with the ambition of conquering the whole of Bangal. He also knew that it was not a very difficult affair, as he had already defeated the Bangal forces twice—at Surajgarh and Gaur. Moreover, he was aware of the details of the negotiations between Mahmud and the Portuguese and was anxious to prevent a firm alliance between the two. Within one year of the treaty he made preparations (1537) for a fresh attack on Bangal. A pretext was soon found. Mahmud had failed to pay the agreed annual tribute and had not given up his unfriendly policy. He was no match for Sher Khan and was compelled to take refuge in the fortress of Gaur. From there he sent an express appeal to Humayun to help him in his hour of danger. Sher Khan knew that he must act quickly if he wanted success. He sent his son, Jalal Khan, and his most capable and loyal general, Khawas Khan, to besiege Gaur and to finish off the conquest of Bangal before any aid from Humayun could reach the ruler of that kingdom. At the same time, he sent a part of his army to occupy some of the outlying districts of Mahmud's territory like Chittagong. The fall of the kingdom of Bangal was now only a question of time.

Humayun's march against Sher Khan; the fall of Chunargarh, 1537-38.

Sher Khan's rapid progress against Bangal and an enormous accession to his power roused Humayun who sent Hindu Beg to Jaunpur with instructions to study the situation and send a report

as soon as possible. This Mughul nobleman, who seems to have been on friendly terms with Sher Khan, reported that the eastern frontier was quiet and there was nothing to fear from the Afghan chief. A short while afterwards Humayun received Mahmud's appeal for assistance and a little later the alarming tidings that the whole of Bangal was about to fall into Sher Khan's hands. Accordingly, the Mughul emperor, who had wasted a year (August 1536-July 1537) at Agra, made arrangements for setting out towards Chunar. He entrusted the government of Agra to Meer Muhammad Bakhshi and that of Delhi to Meer Fakir Ali and posted Yadgar Nasir Mirza at Kalpi, Nur-ud-din at Kanauj and Hindu Beg at Jaunpur and left Agra on 27th July, 1537. On arriving at Chunar in November, he ordered the investment of the fort which had been put by Sher Khan in the charge of his son, Qutub Khan, and brother, Ghazi Khan Sur. The fort could not be captured easily and the siege lasted for six months (October 1537-March 1538). Rumi Khan, however, managed to capture it by a stratagem. After appointing Rumi Khan commander, the emperor advanced to Banaras, wavering whether he should proceed to Gaur to the assistance of Mahmud of Bangal or invade South Bihar in order to crush Sher Khan's rising power in the very heart of the latter's dominion. He had wasted six precious months before the walls of Chunar whose acquisition brought him little advantage, as it did not command land routes and could have safely been left with a detachment of his army to keep watch on the Afghan garrison. During this interval Sher Khan had conquered the Bangal territory between Mungir and Gaur (July to October, 1537) and besieged Mahmud's capital.

While encamped at Banaras Humayun opened negotiations with Sher Khan who had returned to Bihar leaving Jalal Khan and Khawas Khan to conduct the siege of Gaur. In order to be very near Sher Khan's territory Humayun now pressed on to Maner on the river Son. He asked Sher Khan to surrender all his territory in Bihar and Bangal and accept a small *jagir* in Rohtasgarh or Chunargarh or Jaunpur. The terms were naturally rejected by Sher Khan. Humayun now wanted the surrender of Bihar, but agreed that Sher Khan should continue to hold Bangal and pay him an annual tribute of Rs. 10 lakhs. Sher Khan agreed to the terms and Humayun sent him a robe of honour and a horse. A satisfactory solution of the dispute seemed to be in sight.

Sher Khan acquires Rohtasgarh.

A little before the commencement of negotiations with Humayun, Sher Khan, who seems to have been aware of the emperor's designs, had acquired the strong fortress of Rohtasgarh in Bihar by stratagem. This fort is situated on the upper course of the river Son in the heart of an extensive expanse of land covered by hills and jungles and is believed to have been built by Rohitashwa, son of the celebrated Harish Chandra. It was in the possession of a Hindu raja with whose Brahman minister, named Churaman, Sher Khan cultivated friendly relations. There are two versions of the story regarding his acquisition of this strong fort which he wanted to use as a safe refuge for his family and treasures. It is said that he begged the raja to afford shelter to his women and on the latter's agreeing to do so he smuggled into the fort, in covered litters, a large number of well-armed Afghan troops disguised as women. Once inside the fort, they threw off their mask, captured the fort and drove away the raja's men. This story has been rejected by modern writers. The other version is more worthy of credence. According to it Sher Khan, who had bribed the raja's minister, obtained from him a promise of shelter in the fort. Although the raja remonstrated against the minister's imprudent promise, yet he was obliged to agree, as Churaman said that he had given his word and his honour was at stake. Soon after the Afghans were allowed to enter the fort they expelled the raja's troops and took possession of the fort (1538). Rohtasgarh, one of the strongest forts in the country, not only afforded Sher Khan a safe retreat for his family but also gave him a huge treasure that had been piled up there by generations of thrifty Hindu kings. Having lodged his women and children there, Sher Khan felt free to settle his scores with Humayun.

Gaur falls into Afghan hands.

While Humayun was wavering between peace with Sher Khan and his projected campaign against Bangal, Jalal Khan and Khawas Khan, whom Sher Khan had left to conquer Gaur, were pushing on with the siege of the capital of Bangal. They made attempts to storm the fort. Sher Khan sent instructions to his son to bring the Bangal campaign to a speedy conclusion by capturing Gaur, as Humayun was likely to hasten to the support of Sultan Mahmud. Khawas Khan now redoubled his efforts. He devastated the country around and cut off all supplies, reducing the garrison to great straits.

Mahmud being hard pressed, evacuated his capital and fled towards North Bihar. The Afghans pursued him and defeated him in a pitched battle in which he was badly wounded; but he succeeded in making good his escape, and retreated towards Hajipur in perturbation of mind. The two Afghan generals now occupied Gaur and established Sher Khan's rule in Bangal. Sher Khan was pleased at the news and sent instructions to his son, Jalal Khan, to transfer the huge treasures accumulated by generations of the sultans to his new asylum of Rohtasgarh before Humayun could approach the western boundary of Bangal.

Break with Humayun; the Mughul occupation of Bangal.

At this time Humayun received piteous appeals from Mahmud of Bangal, who a little later himself arrived at the Mughul camp at Maner and sought the protection of the emperor. Humayun, who had settled terms of peace with Sher Khan, now changed his mind, gave up the idea of ratifying the treaty and decided to proceed to Bangal to conquer that province. Sher Khan rightly looked upon the failure of the conclusion of a treaty as a breach of faith on the part of Humayun. He roused the resentment and passion of his Afghan troops by telling them that in spite of his willingness to surrender the very home of the Afghans in India and agreeing to become a Mughul vassal and paying the emperor a tribute, the latter had declined to make peace and was bent upon the complete destruction of the Afghan race. His men gave him the assurance of standing by him and fighting to the bitter end for the preservation of the Afghan race.

Humayun now resumed his journey eastward and although Mahmud died at Khalgaon (Colgaon), Humayun continued his march to capture Gaur. Sher Khan, who had made arrangements for the transfer of Bangal treasures from Gaur to Rohtasgarh, directed Jalal Khan to proceed to Teliagarhi with his army and defend the pass against the Mughuls so as to enable the Afghans to carry away the Gaur treasures. Teliagarhi, situated seven miles east of the modern Sahebgang, (on the E. I. R. Loop line), was in medieval age "the key of Bangal". Jalal Khan did not content himself with merely defending the place, but attacked the advance-guard of the Mughuls under Mubarak Khan. So successfully did he perform his duty of holding up the Mughuls at this pass that Humayun was delayed for

one month and Sher Khan during the interval transferred all the treasures from Gaur to Rohtas. As soon as this work was accomplished Jalal Khan was recalled from Teliagarhi which he left so quietly that the Mughuls came to know of his evacuation of the pass only the next day. Humayun now proceeded to Gaur, Sher Khan wisely permitting the entire Mughul army to proceed to Bangal without molestation. As soon as Humayun had entered Gaur the Afghan chief made arrangements for cutting off his communications. He sent parties of Afghans to Banaras, Jaunpur, Kalpi and Kanauj to drive away the Mughul officers from there. The Afghans occupied Tirhut and attacked and killed Meer Fazli, governor of Banaras, and occupied the place. Next, they captured Jaunpur and thence proceeded towards Kanauj. Hindal had already abandoned his post and fled to Agra where he set himself up as king. He killed Shaikh Bahlol for whom Humayun had great regard, and alienated important nobles and the members of the Mughul ruling family. The entire country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj fell into the hands of Sher Khan who posted his men at important places and made arrangements for the establishment of order and the collection of revenue.

All this time Humayun was sunk in sloth and pleasures at Gaur. After eight months' inaction he was roused from his slumber by the alarming news that his lines of communications had been completely shattered and that he had been completely cut off from Delhi and Agra as a result of the Afghan occupation of the country from Teliagarhi to Kanauj. He now hastened to retrace his steps towards Agra, leaving Jahangir Quli Beg with five thousand men to hold Bangal.

Battle of Chausa, June 26, 1539.

Askari led the advance-guard, while Humayun at the head of another division marched a few miles behind. At Mungir the brothers joined and crossed the Ganga to its southern bank and proceeded along the old Grand Trunk Road which passed through the territory of Sher Khan. The vigilant Afghan scouts regularly communicated the movement of the Mughul army to Sher Khan, who decided for an open contest with the Mughul emperor. The emperor, however, could not keep the Grand Trunk Road and near Bihiya (in Bhojpur district) he was obliged to cross the river back to its northern bank. His mistakes and difficulties gave Sher

Khan an opportunity to give up the policy of sitting on the fence and to get ready for a contest. He hovered round the Mughul army, harassed it in every possible manner, and compelled it to engage in a series of skirmishes. Being thus harassed, Humayun reached Chausa, 10 miles south-west of Baksar and a short distance from the river Karmanasa, which is the boundary between Bihar and the modern Uttar Pradesh, and again crossed the Ganga over to its southern bank. Sher Khan now personally appeared in the neighbourhood and withdrew himself a little distance in order to enable Humayun, who was crossing the river, to land on its southern bank without hesitation. This was a proper moment for the emperor to have launched an attack on the Afghan troops who were tired as the result of several days' forced and rapid march, while Humayun's own men were comparatively fresh. The delay gave Sher Khan time to fortify his camp and give his men the much-needed rest. Also a large number of Afghan troops from Bihar gathered under his banner. For the above reasons Sher Khan, too, did not take up the offensive and the antagonists, therefore, lay facing each other for three months. In fact Sher Khan purposely delayed the contest, as his strategy was to wait till the advent of the rainy season when he would compel the Mughuls to fight at a disadvantage.

During this interval Humayun made an attempt to avoid battle and settle his dispute with Sher Khan by peaceful means. He sent an envoy to the Afghan camp agreeing to allow Sher Khan to retain the provinces of Bangal and Bihar if he acknowledged him (Humayun) his overlord, read the Khutba and struck coins in the emperor's name throughout his dominions. But he wanted him to surrender the remaining territory. Sher Khan feigned willingness to comply and suggested that in addition to Bangal and Bihar he should be allowed to retain possession of Chunargarh. Humayun, however, did not agree to this and the negotiations fell through. But realising his own weakness, the emperor, on the eve of the battle of Chausa, made one more attempt to arrive at an understanding and sent the saintly Mulla Mir Muhammad Parghari to Sher Khan to persuade him to give up his hostile intention. The latter reciprocated and deputed Shaikh Khalil, who, too, was reputed to be a man of piety, to negotiate terms on his behalf. Humayun was impressed by the Afghan agent and entrusted him with negotiations on his behalf also. When Shaikh Khalil reported to Sher Khan the

substance of his talk with Humayun, the Afghan leader shrewdly asked the Shaikh's personal opinion whether the Afghans should fight for their existence or make peace with the Mughuls. Shaikh Khalil replied that they ought to fight. This was what Sher Khan really wanted. Hardly had Shaikh Khalil uttered the words when he declared that the peace talks had come to an end.

As soon as the rains set in Sher Khan got ready for the contest. The Mughul encampment, which stood on the low land between the Ganga and the Karmanasa, was flooded, causing confusion among the troops. On 25th June, 1539, Sher Khan marshalled his troops and gave out that he was proceeding to attack Maharatha Chero, who was the chief of an aboriginal tribe in the Shahabad district of Bihar. The news put the Mughuls off their guard. Sher Khan actually proceeded in the direction of the Chero territory, but returned after midnight and made a surprise attack on the Mughuls who were asleep in their camps. The Afghan army, which was divided into three divisions under Sher Khan, his son Jalal Khan, and his greatest general, Khawas Khan, respectively, attacked the Mughuls from three different directions. Consternation fell upon the imperialists. The tumult aroused Humayun who sprang on a horse and tried to collect his men, but most of his troops had already dispersed and fled to save themselves. Humayun failed to reach his tent, but he was conducted out of danger by a few of his trusted followers. Sher Khan won the battle and routed the Mughuls. Humayun could not cross the Ganga on an elephant and was obliged to go to the other side with the help of an inflated skin (mashak) of a water-carrier, named Nizam. All his camp with its splendid equipage fell into the hands of Sher Khan. Many of the ladies of the Mughul harem, including his chief queen, Bega Begam, were left behind in the camp. The Afghan victory was so complete that the entire Mughul army was annihilated, and not a trace of the enemy was left. Humayun himself, attended by a few men, fled towards Agra.

The victory of Chausa proved to be momentous, and it produced far-reaching results. Its first consequence was to bring about a radical change in Sher Khan's objective in life. The horizon of his "ambition was immensely widened". Dr. Qanungo rightly observes that one year before Chausa he would have contented himself with the position of a Mughul vassal, if he had been left unmolested in

Bangal. "Now he won, by this single stroke, Jaunpur in addition to Bangal and Bihar in independent sovereignty and could legitimately claim equality with the emperor." His ambition now was to drive away the Mughuls from India and to sit upon the throne of Delhi. Soon after the victory of Chausa he crossed the Ganga and occupied the country as far as Kanauj. He took steps to consolidate his new possessions and to convert them into a compact kingdom.

Sher Khan as king of Bangal and Bihar, 1539-1540.

The victory at Chausa made Sher Khan a *de facto* king of Bihar and Bangal. He had only to expel from Gaur the garrison of Mughul troops left there by Humayun. But, inspite of his vast possessions, Sher Khan was still a private man and had no legal status. In order, therefore, to command the unquestioned allegiance and loyalty of his people, it was necessary for him to go through the formality of a coronation. That step alone would raise him to a position of equality with other rulers in this country. Sher Khan had not forgotten how in spite of his ability and success he had been twice brushed aside and almost all the notable Afghans had flocked under the banner of such a worthless creature as Mahmud Lodi simply because he was a descendant of Bahlol Lodi and had assumed the high sounding title of sultan after the defeat and death of his brother, Ibrahim Lodi. Hence he decided to become king in name as well as in fact. But being aware of the democratic character of his Afghan followers he proceeded rather cautiously in carrying out his new project. At a meeting of the Afghan notables immediately after their grand victory, a suggestion was made regarding the issue of letters of victory (Fatehnamah). Sher Khan shrewdly remarked that it could only be done in the name of a king. Thereupon, *Masnad-i-Ali* Isa Khan, guessing his chief's inner-most desire proposed that their leader, Sher Khan, should assume the title of king. The proposal was seconded by Azam Humayun Sarwani and Biban Lodi. Other notables present accepted the proposal with acclamation. The Afghan soldiery now urged that the coronation ceremony should be performed without delay. Accordingly Sher Khan "ordered the astrologers to fix an auspicious moment." The ceremony was simple. Sher Khan took his seat upon the throne and royal umbrella was held up over his head. He assumed the title of Sher Shah and coins were struck and the khutba read in his name. After the ceremony letters of victory were drafted and sent to various parts of his dominions.

Immediately after the coronation ceremony, which seems to have taken place at Chausa, Sher Shah sent an army to Gaur in order to expel the Mughul garrison from there. Jahangir Quli Beg Khan was defeated and slain along with his companions. The whole of Bangal was now occupied. Next, arrangements were made to establish garrisons in the country up to Kanauj and Kalpi which had been partly reduced and occupied before the battle of Chausa. The new king settled his conquests by appointing officers to maintain peace, administer justice and collect revenues.

Simultaneously with the work of settling the new country Sher Shah took steps to pursue Humayun. It will be recalled that some of the ladies of Humayun's harem had fallen into his hands at Chausa. Sher Shah had made suitable arrangement for their protection and comfort. After his coronation ceremony he sent the ladies under an escort back to Humayun. The pursuit of Humayun seemed to have been half-hearted. Had Sher Shah really cared to intercept the fugitive emperor, Humayun would not have reached Agra in safety. But Sher Shah sent a mission to Malwa and Gujarat requesting the rulers of those provinces not to afford any shelter to Humayun and promising them help if they attacked the fugitive emperor. There was no response from Gujarat as it had not yet recovered from its recent confusion. But Mallu Khan of Mandu, who had set himself up as king under the title of Qadir Shah, sent a favourable reply.

Battle of Bilgram, May 17, 1540.

Meanwhile Humayun who had met with many difficulties during his flight from Chausa reached Agra where he held consultations with his brothers, who, as usual, failed to agree among themselves. Despite many handicaps, Humayun got together a fresh army to fight Sher Shah, who was rapidly approaching Agra. He had despatched his son, Qutub Khan, towards Mandu in order to persuade Qadir Shah to co-operate with him and turn Humayun's flank from that side. Informed of his movement, Humayun deputed Askari and Hindal to proceed against Qutub Khan and overtake him before he could effect a junction with Qadir Shah. The latter made no attempt to join Qutub Khan who was attacked, defeated and killed by the Mughul army near Kalpi. Askari and Hindal returned to join Humayun who advanced towards Kanauj to meet Sher Shah

who had already arrived there and was encamped on the eastern bank of the river. The Mughul army consisted of two lakhs of men all told, but its fighting strength was not more than 40,000. According to Mirza Haider, Sher Shah's troops numbered 15,000. There is, however, reason to believe that the Afghan army could not have been inferior in numerical strength to that of Humayun. The antagonists lay encamped facing each other for one month without taking up an offensive. Sher Shah, however, matured his plan of a surprise attack on his antagonist as soon as the first shower of rain fell and swamped the Mughul camp. The plan succeeded and on the 17th May, 1540, while the Mughuls were shifting their camp to a better site, he launched an attack on them and successfully deprived them of the use of their heavy artillery which was left behind. In spite of Mirza Haider's attempt to marshal the Mughul troops Humayun suffered an easy defeat and fled back towards Agra. (Details *vide* Chapter III, pages 58-60).

SHER SHAH AS KING OF HINDUSTAN (1540-1545)

Pursuit of Humayun.

After this momentous victory Sher Shah crossed the river and occupied Kanauj. From there he despatched Barmazid Ghur with a large force to pursue Humayun and hound him out of the country, but not to engage him in battle. Another army was sent to besiege Gwalior, while some troops were ordered to occupy Sambhal and the territory to the east of the Ganga. Barmazid pursued Humayun to Agra. On entering Agra he slew a number of Mughuls. When Sher Shah, after consolidating the conquered country, reached Agra a few days after Humayun's flight, he rebuked Barmazid for his cruel conduct and sent him and Khawas Khan to continue the pursuit of the ex-emperor. By the time Humayun reached Lahore his Afghan pursuers had arrived at Sultanpur Lodi (July 1540). As the rains had set in Khawas Khan had to halt at Sultanpur for about three months. Meanwhile, Sher Shah entered Delhi and took steps to organise its administration. Thence he proceeded to the frontier of the Panjab to be in touch with the movements of the fugitive Mughul emperor.

Humayun had clear three months' respite at Lahore, and yet he failed to re-unite his brothers and chalk out a plan to make a firm stand against the Afghans. Kamran felt that if he agreed to

allow Humayun a permanent footing in the Panjab he would eventually have to lose Kabul and Kandhar as well. So he entered into negotiations with Sher Shah in the erroneous belief that it was safer to hand over the Panjab to him. Humayun had, consequently, to abandon Lahore as soon as the Afghans had crossed the river near Sultanpur in the third week of October 1540. The Mughuls fled from Lahore in great confusion. At the town of Khushab on the Jhelam there was an unseemly quarrel between Humayun and Kamran who would not allow his brother to pass through Afghanistan. From that place Humayun took the road towards Sindh, while Kamran, abandoning the Panjab, left for Kabul. The moment Humayun had left the boundary of Hindustan Khawas Khan gave up the pursuit and halted on the western bank of the river Jhelam. By this time Sher Shah, who was supervising the activities of his men from his camp at Sarhind, arrived at Lahore and without halting there for long proceeded to the Chinab and reached Khushab. He then sent two parties of his troops, one under Khawas Khan and the other under Qutub Khan, to pursue the Mughuls, with instructions not to engage them but to drive them beyond the borders of the kingdom. Khawas Khan pursued Humayun as far as the Panjanad river, to the west of Uch, from where they returned and rejoined Sher Shah at Khushab.

Conquest of the Gakkhar country.

Sher Shah remained encamped at Khushab for a few months and received submission of Baloch chiefs, such as Ismail Khan, Fateh Khan, Ghazi Khan and some others who inhabited the country between the Chinab and the Indus. Then he undertook a campaign for the reduction of the Gakkhar country which was a mountainous region and situated between the upper courses of the Jhelam and the Indus. Its possession for the ruler of Delhi was necessary owing to its strategic situation. Sher Shah undertook the tour of the mountainous area and launched an offensive against the Gakkhar chiefs. He ravaged their territory, but failed to reduce them to complete submission. A few of the chiefs, particularly Rai Sarang Gakkhar, refused to acknowledge Sher Shah's authority and continued to be hostile. The Afghan king, therefore, decided to build a fort there in order to guard his northern frontier and to keep the Gakkhars in check. He selected a strategic site in the hills, 10 miles north of the town of Jhelam, and there he built a gigantic fortress and named it

Rohtas, after his well-known stronghold in Bihar. He garrisoned it with 50,000 seasoned Afghan troops under the command of his able generals, Haibat Khan Niyazi and Khawas Khan. He also tried to dislodge Mirza Haider from Kashmir by supporting Kachi Chakk, but did not succeed. At this time he received news of the rebellion of his governor of Bangal and so he left the work of the subjugation of the Gakkhars in the hands of his lieutenants and hastened towards Bangal (March 1541) to chastise the rebellious Khizr Khan.

The new administration of Bangal.

During Sher Shah's absence for more than a year, Khizr Khan, governor of Bangal, began entertaining the dream of independence. He married the daughter of the deceased Sultan Mahmud of Gaur in order to enlist the support of the sympathisers of the ex-ruling family of Bangal, and began to behave as if he were an independent ruler. Sher Shah was much annoyed on hearing the reports and proceeded quickly to Gaur to bring Khizr Khan to book. He dismissed the governor and put him in chains. Having decided to do away with military governorship to avert the danger of a future rebellion, he remodelled the administration of Bangal. He divided the province into several *sarkars* (districts) placing each of them under an officer called *shiqdar* with a small force under his command adequate for maintaining peace and order. They were appointed by the king and were responsible to him alone. To supervise the work of these officers and to settle disputes among them he appointed a civilian, named Qazi Fazilat, as the head of the province. This officer did not seem to have a powerful army under his command. His duties were to see that all the districts were properly administered, that the royal revenues were regularly remitted to the central treasury, and that the district officers did not enter into any conspiracy and did not mediate a rebellion against the king. These arrangements completely "changed the military character of the provincial administration and substituted a completely new mechanism, at once original in principle and efficient in working."

Conquest of Malwa, 1542.

From Bengal Sher Shah returned to Agra. In 1542 he invaded Malwa whose possession was essential for the integrity and safety of his kingdom. Mallu Khan, who had obtained possession of Mandu, Ujjain and Sarangpur in 1537 and set himself up as an independent king

under the title of Qadir Shah, gave offence to Sher Shah by claiming equality with him. He had also failed to fulfil his promise of supporting Sher Shah's son, Qutub Khan, against the Mughuls, and Qutub Khan had been surrounded and slain by Askari and Hindal in 1540. For these reasons, Sher Shah considered it necessary to undertake an expedition to Malwa. On reaching Gwalior, which in spite of its prolonged siege by his army, had not surrendered, he received the submission of the governor of the fortress. Then he pushed on to Sarangpur. Qadir Shah feeling helpless before the mightly invader, left Ujjain and waited on Sher at Sarangpur. The Afghan monarch received him with courtesy and the two entered Ujjain, the then capital of Malwa. Sher took possession of the place and transferred Qadir Shah to the governorship of Lakhanuti in Bangal (according to another authority, Kalpi). Qadir Shah became apprehensive of Sher Shah's intention and fled along with his family one night and took refuge with Mahmud III of Gujarat. A major portion of Malwa was thus annexed to Sher Shah's dominions and placed under the charge of Shujaat Khan. Some time after Qadir Shah attacked Shujaat Khan, but was eventually beaten.

On his return march from Ujjain to Agra, Sher Shah passed by way of Ranthambhor and successfully persuaded the commandant of the fortress to deliver it into his hands. He remained for one year at Agra during which period he engaged himself in organising the administration of his kingdom.

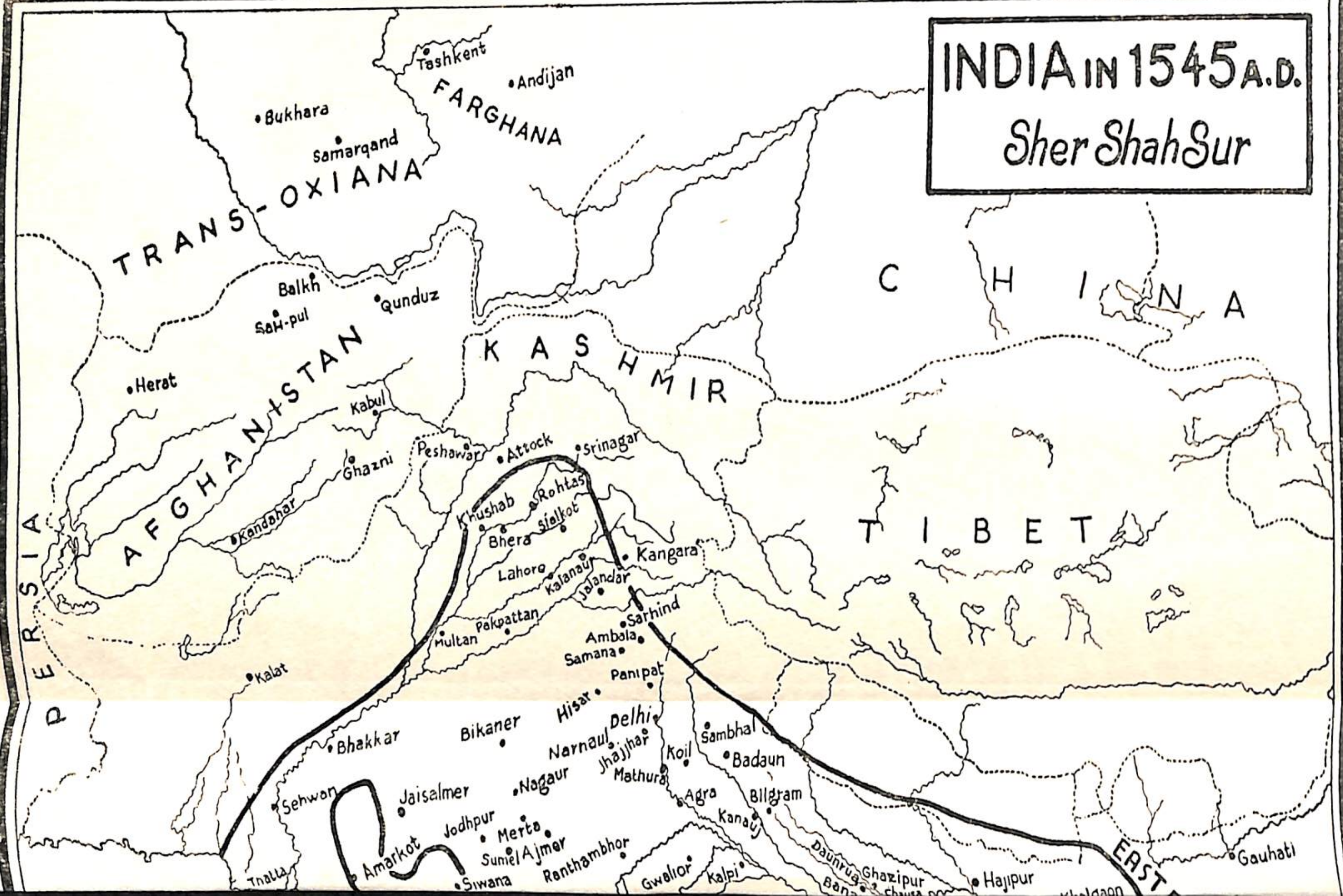
Conquest of Raisin, 1543.

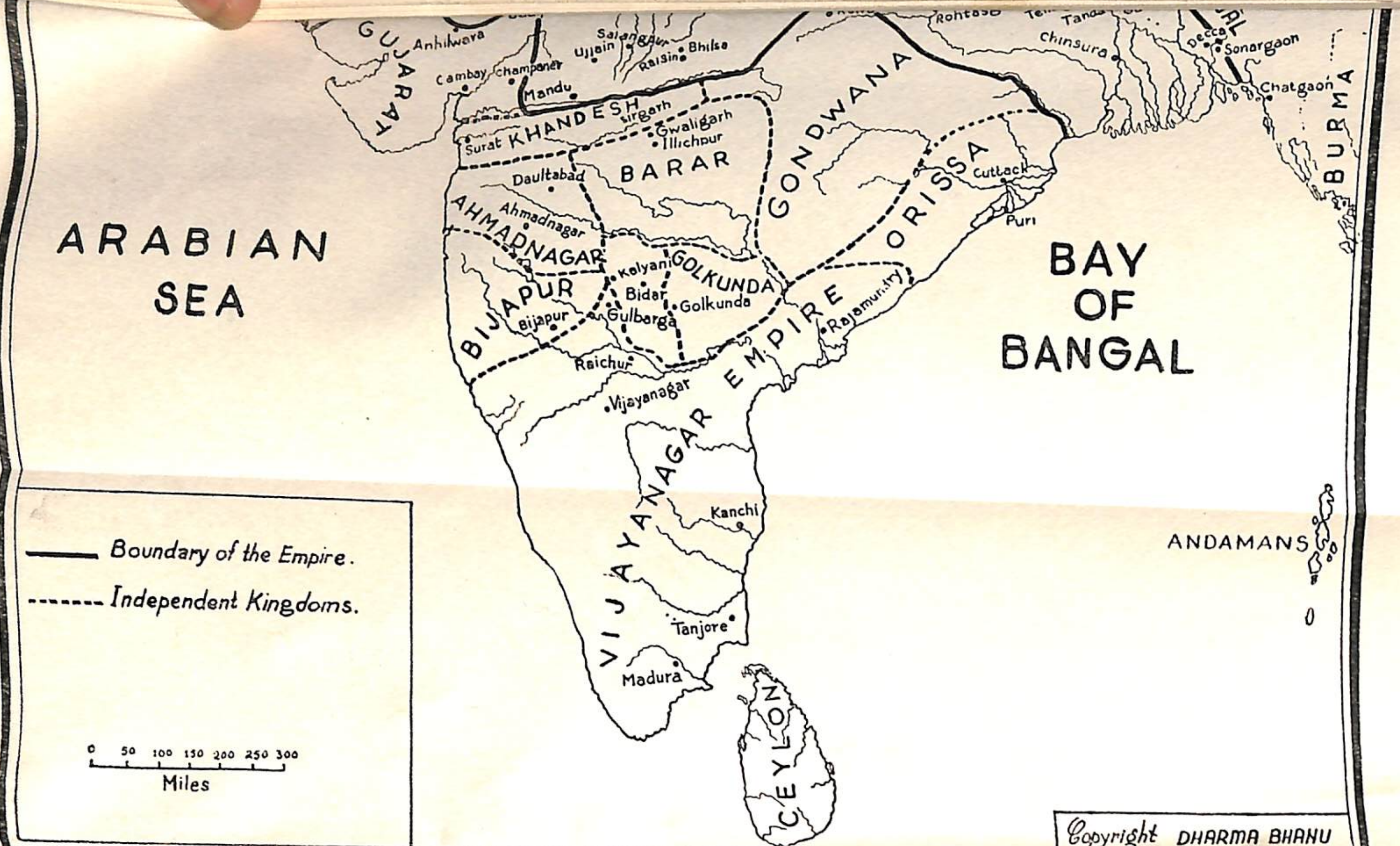
The principality of Raisin in Central India had risen to a place of importance during the later days of Humayun's reign. Its ruler, Puran Mal, son of Rai Silhadi, a Chauhan Rajput, had conquered Chanderi and reduced many Muslim families that had been in possession of considerable land. In 1542 Puran Mal had waited on Sher Shah and had been honoured by the bestowal of princely gifts. But the Afghan monarch coveted the fertile principality of Raisin. Moreover, he had received reports of Puran Mal's policy of subjugating the old feudal Muslim families, some of whom were reduced to poverty and their women enslaved and driven to take to the profession of dancing. So he wanted to punish Puran Mal, whose conduct in his eyes amounted to an offence against Islam. Leaving Agra in 1543, he proceeded to Mandu and thence to Raisin which was besieged. Puran Mal seems to

have been prepared for the contest and the siege lasted for a long time. Sher Shah saw no other way except starving the garrison by cutting off all supplies. Even then the brave Rajputs did not surrender. But when Sher Shah made a solemn promise sworn on the Quran that the lives of the Rajput chief and his followers and their property would be respected, Puran Mal surrendered, and they were lodged in a camp near Sher Shah. It is said that Sher Shah was inclined to keep his word, but at the appeals made by the widows of the Muslims of Chanderi, who had suffered at Puran Mal's hands, he changed his mind. But he did not know how to extricate himself from the obligation of the oath that he had taken on the Quran. The fanatical qazis, however, came to his help and they declared that an oath that should not have been taken could not be binding on him. This theological pronouncement agreed with the inner-most desire of Sher Shah himself. He made up his mind to attack Puran Mal. His elephants were kept in readiness and the Afghan troops were posted around the Rajput camp during the night. When the day dawned, Puran Mal discovered that an attack was to be made on him. He, thereupon, killed his women with his own hands and directed his followers to despatch off their families so as not to be obsessed by the thought of their safety and be in a position to fight the Afghans and face death without fear. As they were busy in this ghastly work the Afghans fell on them. Puran Mal and his brave troops displayed prodigies of valour and in the words of the Muslim historian, fought "like hogs at bay". But they were hopelessly out-numbered and killed to a man. Some of the Rajput women and children who remained were converted into slaves. Sher Shah's perfidious conduct against Puran Mal is "the deepest blot on his memory".

The acquisition of Multan and Sindh.

When Sher Shah was recalled from Khushab by the news of a rebellion in Bengal he had left Khawas Khan and Haibat Khan to administer the Punjab and keep the Gakkhars in check. As these two officers could not pull on together, Sher Shah removed Khawas Khan and appointed Haibat Khan Niyazi governor of the province with instructions to reduce the rebellious chiefs and bring the neighbouring territories under his control. The new governor had to face two rebel leaders, Fateh Khan Jat, whose depredations had made the road between Delhi and Lahore unsafe, and Bakhshu Langah, who had established himself as an independent ruler of Multan. Haibat Khan mar-


INDIA IN 1545 A.D.
Sher Shah Sur
TRANS-OXIANA
FARGHANA
Tashkent
Andijan
Bukhara
Samarqand
Balkh
Sar-i-pul
Qunduz
AFGHANISTAN
Herat
Kabul
Ghazni
Kandahar
Kalat
PERSIA
KASHMIR
Srinagar
Peshawar
Attock
Khushab
Rohtas
Bhera
Sialkot
Lahore
Kalanaur
Jalandar
Kangara
Multan
Pakpattan
Sarhind
Ambala
Samana
Panipat
Hisar
Delhi
Bikaner
Bhakkar
Narnaul
Jhajjhar
Koil
Sambhal
Badaun
Mathura
Agra
Bilgram
Kanauj
Nagaur
Jaisalmer
Sehwan
Jodhpur
Merta
Sumel
Ajmer
Ranthambhor
Amarkot
Siwana
Thatta
Gwalior
Kalpi
Daunrua
Ghazipur
Hajipur
Gauhati
CHINA
TIBET
EAST


ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
GUJARAT
Anhilwara
Cambay
Champaner
Mandu
Ujjain
Raisin
Bhilsa
Surat
KHANDESH
Sirgarh
Gwaligarh
Illichpur
BARAR
Daultabad
GONDWANA
Rohtas
Chinsura
Decca
Sonargaon
Chatgaon
BURMA
ORISSA
Cuttack
Puri
Ahmadnagar
AHMADNAGAR
Kalyani
GOLKUNDA
Bidar
Golkunda
BIJAPUR
Bijapur
Gulbarga
Raichur
Rajamundry
Vijayanagar
VIJAYANAGAR EMPIRE
Kanchi
Tanjore
Madura
CEYLON
ANDAMANS
Boundary of the Empire.
Independent Kingdoms.
0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles
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ched on Ajudhan (Pak Pattan), which was Fateh Khan's stronghold. The Jat chief fled from his headquarters and was besieged in a mud fort. He was, however, defeated and compelled to surrender. He was made a prisoner. Next, Haibat Khan proceeded to Multan and occupied it. Sher Shah was pleased with this achievement and rewarded Haibat Khan. He instructed the governor to re-people Multan, which had been deserted, and not to introduce the measurement system and realise one-fourth of gross produce of land in accordance with the custom of the Langahs. While Fateh Khan Jat and Hindoo Baloch, who had been taken prisoners, were put to death, Sher Shah spared the lives of Bakhshu Langah and his son. He retained Bakhshu Langah's son as a hostage and resotred his land to him. Fateh Jang Khan was put in charge of Multan. As the province of Sindh had already been acquired by Sher Shah during his stay at Khushab in 1541 and Ismail Khan, a local chief confirmed as its ruler, Sher Shah's conquest in the north-western corner included Multan and Sindh besides the Panjab proper.

War with Maldeva; acquisition of Rajasthan.

After the death of Rana Sanga of Mewar the state of Marwar, with its capital at Jodhpur, had risen to occupy the first place among the independent kingdoms in Rajasthan. Its ruler, Maldeva Rathor, who ascended the throne after the death of his father, Rao Gangaji, in 1531, was easily the most notable king in the whole of central Hindustan. A gifted soldier and a clever diplomat, he entered on a career of conquest immediately after taking up the reins of government and conquered Sojat, Nagaur, Ajmer, Merta, Jaitaran, Bilara, Bhadrajuns, Mallani, Siwana, Didwana, Pachbhadra and Bali. He waged war against the sister-state of Bikaner and annexed more than half of it. He then fought against Jaipur and captured Jalor, Tonk, Toda, Malpur and a number of other places. He pushed his boundary in the direction of Delhi to include the town of Jhajjhar, about 30 miles from Delhi. Being an ambitious diplomat, he sent an invitation to Humayun in June 1541, to come to Jodhpur and make an attempt to recover the throne of Delhi with his assistance. Obviously, Maldeva's object was to have on the throne of Delhi a ruler who should be his friend and ally. But Humayun appeared near Jodhpur a little more than thirteen months after the receipt of the invitation when the political situation in the country had undergone a considerable change and Sher Shah had established himself as the ruler of most of northern India and consolida-

ted his position beyond question. Moreover, some of the Rajput chiefs, notably Rao Kalyan Mal of Bikaner, who had suffered defeat and spoliation at the hands of Maldeva, had joined Sher Shah and were pressing him to invade Marwar. Sher Shah, therefore, wrote to Maldeva asking him not to give shelter to Humayun but to arrest and deliver him into his hands. Maldeva was on the horns of a dilemma and did not know what to do. His sense of hospitality and chivalry as a Rajput stood in the way of his laying hands on a royal fugitive to whom he had extended an invitation. On the other hand, Sher Shah, who had increased his power and strength so as to establish his undoubted claim for the sovereignty of the whole of nothern India was anxious to persuade the chiefs of Rajasthan to submit and pay him tribute. Besides, he (Sher Shah) was being goaded by Maldeva's Rajput enemies to undertake an expedition against Marwar. Under these embarrassing circumstances the ruler of Marwar chose to be neutral in order not to give offence to the mighty Sher Shah. When Humayun reached Phalodi, about 60 miles short of Jodhpur, Maldeva sent him some fruits, but gave no definite promise of military assistance. Humayun sent his trusted agents to Jodhpur to find out Maldeva's intentions and his attitude towards him. While at Jodhpur, one of these agents, Shams-ud-din Atka Khan, noticed Sher Shah's envoy at the Rathor capital and suspected treachery on the part of the Rathor king. This was confirmed by other agents. Humayun, therefore, had to retrace his steps towards Sindh in August 1542, the Rathor troops harassing him on the way.

Sher Shah was not satisfied with Maldeva's dubious conduct ; he wanted absolute friendliness and submission. Above all, he wanted Maldeva to capture and deliver the ex-king Humayun into his hands. Secondly, the existence of such a powerful ruler as Maldeva, whose kingdom embraced not only Nagaur and Ajmer, which had formerly been parts of the Sultanate of Delhi, but also Jhajjhar, 30 miles from Delhi, was a standing offence to Sher Shah. The kingdom of Marwar was likely to be a danger for his safety. A war between Sher Shah and Maldeva was, therefore, inevitable. Sher Shah, who was at the time of Humayun's march to Marwar not ready for settling his scores with Maldeva once for all, followed the policy of overawing him. So in August 1542, he ordered the mobilisation of his troops so as to mass them on the border of Marwar. It was on account of Sher Shah's movement that Maldeva was compelled to depute Rathor troops to

hound Humayun out of Marwar. Towards the end of 1543, however, when Sher Shah was free from the Raisin expedition he decided to conquer Marwar and marched against Maldeva at the head of 80,000 horse, the largest and the most magnificent army that he had ever led into the field. Starting from Agra, he proceeded to Didwana and thence towards Jodhpur in order to invade Maldeva's capital before the latter, who was away near Ajmer, could return to obstruct his march. As he entered the territory of Maldeva, he adopted the precaution of entrenching the camp at every stage by piles of sand bags. When he reached Merta, 70 miles north-east of Jodhpur and 42 miles west of Ajmer, Maldeva was frightened and at the head of his 40,000 horse hastened back to save his capital and to face the enemy in open battle.* The two armies lay opposite one another for a month at the village of Sumel, near Jaitaran. Sher Shah was reduced to great straits as he could get with great difficulty supplies for his troops and fodder for his horses. The initiative was in the hands of Maldeva, and Sher Shah did not know what to do. He, therefore, thought of a stratagem to extricate himself from the critical situation. Having caused letters to be written to himself on behalf of Maldeva's nobles promising that they would arrest the Rathor king and deliver him into his hands, he had them enclosed in a *kharita* (silken bag) and dropped them near Maldeva's camp, as if they had fallen there by accident. The *vakil* of Maldeva picked up the *kharita* and forwarded the letters to his master. Maldeva was dismayed and, suspecting treachery on the part of his officers, decided to give up the impending fight. When the Rajput chieftains heard of their master's resolution of not giving battle and of his suspicion against them, Jayata and Kumpa and some others separated themselves from the main Rathor force and with their 12,000 followers attacked the Afghans in order to clear themselves from the charge of treachery. They carried everything before them and cut their way almost to the very heart of Sher Shah's camp, but were overwhelmed by superior numbers and cut down to a man. Maldeva now saw the truth. But it was too late. His army had dispersed. Nevertheless, the valour of the Rathors had so much impressed Sher Shah, whose loss at their hands had been so great, that he exclaimed that he had almost lost the empire of Hindustan for a handful of *bajra* (millet). As Maldeva had retreated to Jodhpur and from there to Siwana on the border of Gujarat, the Afghan king occupied his terri-

* The above information was kindly supplied by Maharaj-kumar Dr. Raghubir Sinh of Sitamau.

tory from Ajmer to Mount Abu. Having left Khawas Khan and Isa Khan Niyazi to reduce Marwar to order Sher Shah proceeded to Chittor, the capital of Mewar. Marwar, however, did not remain for long in Sher Shah's possession. Within two months of his death Maldeva returned from Siwana, drove away the Afghan governor from Jodhpur and re-occupied his lost territory (July 1545).

There was little difficulty in acquiring Mewar. The Sisodia state, which had once occupied a pre-eminent position in Rajasthan, had sunk into insignificance after the death of Rana Sanga. At this time, it was passing through one of the darkest periods of its history. Banbir, an usurper, had murdered Vikramajit and planned to kill the infant Udaya Sinh, the father of the future Pratap. Mewar had thus not recovered from the evil effects of internecine dissensions that followed the accession of the boy-king Udaya Sinh, in 1542. Not in a position to offer any resistance, the courtiers sent to Sher Shah the keys of the fortress on behalf of Udaya Sinh. Sher Shah placed Shams Khan, brother of Khawas Khan, in charge of Chittor and obtained possession of Jahaj-pur. Next he occupied Ranthambhor and appointed his son, Adil Khan, its governor. Thus most parts of Rajasthan *minus* Jaisalmer and Bikaner came under the suzerainty of Sher Shah who wisely left the Rajput chiefs in possession of their states without reducing them to thorough subjection. His policy towards the chiefs of Rajasthan has been admirably described by Dr. Qanungo in these words: "In Rajasthan Sher Shah made no attempt to up-root the local chiefs or re-duce them to thorough subjection as he had done in other parts of Hindustan. He found the task dangerous as well as fruitless. He did not aim at the complete subversion of their independence but their political and geographical isolation from one another, so as to make any general upheaval against the empire impossible. In short, it was something like a British occupation in the north-western frontier tribal territories, which is meant less for gain than for the safety of the Indian empire." So he established garrisons of troops in important strategic places and kept a strict control over the lines of communication con-necting Rajasthan with other parts of the empire. Ajmer, Jodhpur, Mount Abu and Chittor were fortified and held by Afghan troops.

The conquest of Bundelkhand ; death of Sher Shah, May 1545.

Immediately after the consummation of the successful campaign in Rajasthan Sher Shah marched on Kalinjar. Raja Birbhan Baghela

of Rewa, who was summoned to court, had taken refuge with Raja Kirat Singh of Kalinjar. Kirat Singh turned down Sher Shah's request to surrender the fugitive, and thus gave offence to the Afghan monarch. In order to chastise him, Sher Shah marched on Kalinjar and besieged the fort (November 1544). In spite of all possible exertion, the strong fortress coud not be captured and the siege protracted for about year. At length, Sher Shah saw no way except to make an attempt to blow up the walls of the fort. Accordingly, orders were given to dig mines and to build a high tower for mounting a battery. At the same time arrangements were made to erect covered lanes (*sabat*) in order to afford protection to the attackers. These were ready, and the tower erected was so high that the interior of the fort could be easily seen from its top. On 22nd May, 1545, Sher Shah ordered an assault on the fort and himself advanced to the attack. He ascended the tower and ordered his men to bring a supply of rockets in order to throw them into the fort. One of the rockets when fired against the gate of the town, rebounded and fell into a heap of ammunition lying near the place where Sher Shah was standing. There was a huge explosion and Sher Shah was most severely burnt. He was immediately carried to his tent, but he ordered his men to continue the attack. The assault succeeded and the fort of Kalinjar was taken by storm at about sunset. When news of the capture of the fort and the slaughter of the garrison was reported to Sher Shah "marks of joy and satisfaction appeared on his countenance......" Soon after this he expired (22nd May, 1545).

ADMINISTRATION

Sher Shah a reformer, not an innovator.

The administration of Sher Shah has of late been a subject of controversy. About 35 years ago, scholars of medieval Indian history considered Sher Shah to be primarily a soldier and only secondarily an administrator of average ability. Although as early as 1854 Erskine had shown in his scholarly work, entitled '*History of India Under the First Two Sovereigns of the House of Timur,*' Volume II, that Sher Shah had more the spirit of a legislator and guardian of his people than that of a successful military adventurer, students of history did not fully revise their opinion about him till Dr. K.R. Qanungo, in his scholarly monograph, completely exploded earlier theories about this Afghan ruler and propounded a new one that he

was a greater constructive genius and a better nation-builder than even Akbar the Great. During the last thirties of the present century, a reaction has set in and some scholars, notably Dr. R.P. Tripathi and Dr. P. Saran, have opined, after an examination of Sher Shah's institutions, that his achievements had been very much exaggerated and that he was in fact a reformer and not an innovator. Opinion has now veered round that though Sher Shah was, without doubt, one of the greatest administrators of medieval India, he did not create new institutions ; he only administered the old institutions in a new spirit, and in this task attained so much success that he almost transformed the medieval Indian administration and made it serve the interest of the people. He created no new ministry; his administrative divisions and sub-divisions were borrowed from the past, and so also the titles of his officers. His military reforms were those of Ala-ud-din Khalji; even his revenue administration was not really new and original. But he breathed a new spirit in these old institutions and turned them into instruments of popular good.

The extent of his empire.

Before Sher Shah conquered Delhi he had brought the provinces of Bangal and Bihar under his possession. Within a few years of his final victory over Humayun, his empire embraced practically the whole of northern India, except Assam, Kashmir and Gujarat. It extended from Sonargaon (now in East Bangal) in the east to the Gakkhar country in the north-west. In the north it was bounded by the Himalayas and in the south by the Vindhya Mountains. The empire included most of the Panjab up to the river Indus and Multan and Sindh. In the south it comprised Rajputana (*minus* Jaisalmer), Malwa and Bundelkhand. Kalyan Mal of Bikaner had recognised his suzerainty and got this state back from Maldeva, after the latter's defeat early in 1544. Gujarat was, however, not included as Sher Shah had made no attempt to conquer it.

The Central administration.

Like all rulers of the Sultanate of Delhi Sher Shah was a despot and possessed almost unlimited powers. But, unlike his predecessors, he was a benevolent despot, exercising power for the benefit of the people. Still all the strings of policy and civil and military powers were concentrated in his hands. His ministers were in charge of the daily routine work of administration, and had no authority to initiate policy or to

propose a radical change in the mode of transacting business or in the administrative set-up. It was not humanly possible for one man to look after the interest of such a huge empire without the assistance of ministers. Consequently, Sher Shah had four ministries after the model of the Sultanate period. They were : (1) *Diwan-i-Wizarat*, (2) *Diwan-i-Ariz*, (3) *Diwan-i-Rasalat*, and (4) *Diwan-i-Insha*. Besides them there were minor officers, two (the chief *qazi* and the head of the news department) of whom enjoyed fairly high rank and are placed by some writers in the category of ministers. It will, thus, be seen that the machinery of the central government under Sher Shah was exactly the same as under earlier sultans of Delhi from the time of the so-called Slave kings to the end of those of the Tughluqs.

The head of the *Diwan-i-Wizarat* may be called the *Wazir*. He was the minister of revenue and finance and was, therefore, in charge of the income and expenditure of the empire. Besides, he exercised a general supervisory authority over other ministers. As Sher Shah, had intimate knowledge of the working of the revenue department, he took an enlightened interest in the affairs of the department. We have it on the authority of the historians of the age of Akbar that Sher Shah daily looked into the abstract of income and expenditure of his kingdom and made enquiries about the state of finances and the arrears due from the parganas.

The *Diwan-i-Ariz* was under the *Ariz-i-Mamalik*, who, in modern phraseology, may be designated the army minister. He was not the commander-in-chief of the army, but was in charge of its recruitment, organisation and discipline. He had to make arrangements for payment of the salaries of the troops and officers and to look after the disposition of the army on the field of battle. But, as Sher Shah was personally interested in the military department, he very often interfered with the work of the *Diwan-i-Ariz*. We are told by the chronicles of the time that he was present at the enlistment of fresh recruits and he fixed the salary of individual soldiers and looked after their welfare.

The third ministry was the *Diwan-i-Rasalat* or *Diwan-i-Muhtasib*. The minister in charge of this department may be called foreign minister. His duty was to be in close touch with the ambassadors and envoys sent to and received from foreign states. He must also have been in charge of diplomatic correspondence, and sometimes the charity and endowment department, too, was placed under him.

The fourth ministry was known as *Diwan-i-Insha*. The minister in charge of this department had to draft royal proclamations and despatches. His duty was also to communicate with governors and other local executive officers. Government records, too, were in his charge.

The other departments which were sometimes reckoned as ministries were *Diwan-i-Qaza* and *Diwan-i-Barid*. The chief *qazi* was the head of the first. He had to supervise the administration of justice besides deciding cases, whether in the first instance or appeals from the court of provincial *qazis*. The *Barid-i-Mamalik* was the head of the Intelligence department, and it was his duty to report every important incident to the king. He had a host of news-writers and spies who were posted in towns, markets and in every important locality. He also made arrangements for the posting of news-carriers at various places to carry the royal *dak*.

There seems to have been a high official in charge of the royal household and the various workshops attached to it. He may be called the Lord High Steward. His duty was to administer the king's household department and to keep watch over crowds of servants attached to it. He was very near the royal person and, therefore, enjoyed a high prestige.

Provincial administration.

There are two theories about the administrative divisions of the empire during the reign of Sher Shah. Dr. Qanungo is of opinion that Sher Shah had no higher division than the *sarkar* and that the provinces and provincial governors were the creation of Akbar. Dr. Saran, however, differs from this view and maintains that Sher Shah did have large military governorships and that there existed provinces in India long before the reign of Akbar. Neither of these theories is absolutely correct. Throughout the Sultanate period, including the reign of Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah, there were administrative divisions corresponding to provinces, but they were not uniform in size or income. They were not called *subas* or provinces, but were known as *iqtas* which were assigned to important chiefs. Besides these there were numerous autonomous Hindu states which had chosen to accept the position of vassalage under the sultans of Delhi. Such states and the *iqtas* did not enjoy a uniform political status and were not governed by the same system of administration. But, while during the reigns of

earlier sultans of Delhi the control of the central government over them was nominal, under Sher Shah it was substantial and strict. It will, thus, be seen that there were military governorships in the time of Sher Shah, such as those of Lahore, the Panjab, Malwa and Ajmer. The officials in charge of these provinces were commanders of large armies. At the same time, Sher Shah established a new type of provincial administration in Bangal, which he divided into a number of *sarkars*, placing each in charge of an Afghan officer. At the head of the entire province he placed a civilian with a small army under his command. His principal duty was to supervise the work of the officers of the *sarkars* and to settle their disputes. This was done to guard against rebellion. All the other provinces had governors and a few other officers who seem to have enjoyed the same designation in various provinces, barring which there was no uniformity in their administrative machinery or method. In fact, we have no means of ascertaining the names and number of officers appointed to various provinces ; nor do we know whether the governor was authorised to appoint his colleagues or they were appointed by Sher Shah himself. In short, the provincial administration under Sher Shah was not so well organised as that under Akbar or even as his own *sarkars* or *parganas*.

Sarkars (districts).

Every province was divided into a number of *sarkars* (districts). There were two chief officers in every *sarkar*, *viz*. chief *shiqdar* (*Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran*) and chief *munsif* (*Munsif-i-Munsifan*). The first was a grandee of considerable importance and had a respectable force under his command. His duties were to maintain law and order in the district and to undertake expeditions against rebellious zamindars. He was also required to supervise the work of *shiqdars* of the *parganas* in his districts. The chief *munsif* was primarily a judge. He had to decide civil cases. But at the same time, he seems to have been a supervisor of the work of the *amins* in the *parganas*. Both these officers must have had big official establishments with scores of clerks and accountants to help them in the discharge of their duties.

Parganas.

Each *sarkar* comprised a number of *parganas* which were the lowest units of administration. Sher Shah appointed one *shiqdar*, one *amin* or *munsif*, one *fotadar* (treasurer) and two *karkuns* (writers) in every *pargana*. Besides these, there was a *qanungo* who was a semi-govern-

ment official and was a repository of knowledge about the revenue affairs of the *pargana*. The *shiqdar* was a military officer in charge of a small contingent of troops and was charged with the duty of maintenance of peace. He was required to assist the *amin* and to punish rebellious people. The *amin's* duty was to conduct survey and to make arrangements for the settlement of land revenue. The *fotadar* was the treasurer of the *pargana*. The *karkuns* kept accounts, one in Persian and the other in Hindi.

Sher Shah wisely recognised the autonomous village communities and maintained touch with them through the village officials, namely the *patwari* and the *chowkidar*. Every village of consequence constituted a commonwealth. There was a *panchayat* consisting of the elders of the village which made arrangements for watch and ward, elementary education, sanitation, irrigation and other matters. The *panchayat* also settled disputes.

Army.

Although he had begun his life as a civilian, Sher Shah realised the importance of an efficient military establishment. Like other Afghan kings, he invited Afghans from all parts of the country as well as from Afghanistan and gave them posts suitable to their status and ability. His army, therefore, consisted mostly of Afghans. But there were troops of other nationalities also, including Hindus. Realising that a feudal army was inefficient he followed Alauddin's policy of establishing a permanent standing army which was paid partly by grant of *jagir* and partly in cash from the royal treasury, but in all cases officered and commanded by competent men selected and appointed by Sher Shah himself. The chronicles tell us that Sher Shah took personal interest in the army and recruited troops and fixed the salary of individual soldiers by careful personal observation of individual recruits. It could be possible only for the troops who were enlisted at the capital; but he must have permitted his officers in the provincial capitals to enlist troops without reference to him. Sher Shah revived Alauddin's practice of branding horses in order to prevent the troops from selling away the government horses and bringing in their places worthless ponies at the time of musters. Besides, he instituted the practice of recording the descriptive roll of every soldier so to do away with the practice of sending proxies at the time of military review or battle. As a result of these reforms much

of the corruption was eliminated and the army became a powerful instrument of force. The relation between the individual trooper and his immediate officer was changed "from one of personal attachment into something like an official tie". Promotion of the troops depended upon their merit and the actual service performed, and was not left to the caprice of the commanding officer, though his recommendation was duly taken into consideration by the sultan. It is wrongly supposed that Sher Shah abolished the jagir system and paid salaries of the officers and troops in cash. While the troops were generally paid in cash, the officers and nobles continued to enjoy jagirs as before. Sher Shah, however, introduced one healthy reform; it was that of paying his troops individually and not through the commanding officers or nobles.

Sher Shah's army consisted chiefly of cavalry; but he had infantry also which was armed with muskets. He possessed a large part of artillery consisting of guns and cannon of various calibre and efficiency. His musketry was famous for its efficiency. At his capital he had 1,50,000 cavalry, 25,000 infantry armed with matchlocks and 300 elephants who were always kept in readiness for service. Besides this, there were contingents of troops posted at strategic places all over his kingdom. The total strength of his army cannot be accurately ascertained. It may, however, be surmised that the strength of the provincial armies must have been equal to that stationed at the capital. There was no regular training or drill in those days. Regimental discipline was also unknown. But Sher Shah divided his army into divisions, each under a veteran commander. As he took personal interest in the organisation, equipment and discipline of his forces and allowed his troops to come into close contact with him, raw recruits were transformed into good soldiers within a year or so of their enlistment. Transport and commissariat arrangements were left to the soldiers and commanders. Nothing like the arrangements of our time existed in the medieval age. *Banjaras* or roving grain merchants provided provisions, and all other necessities could easily be had, as merchants invariably accompanied the medieval armies.

Finance.

The revenue of the empire was derived from several sources and may be divided into two main classes—(1) central revenue, and

(2) local revenue. The local revenue was derived from a variety of taxes called *abwabs* which were levied on production and consumption of various trades and professions and most of them on transport. The sources of central revenue were heirless property, commerce, mint, presents, inheritance, salt, customs, *jizya* (poll tax), *khams* and land revenue. The state charged duty on the transport of raw materials and finished goods. The royal mint was also a source of profit. All unclaimed property and the effects of deceased persons who left no heirs passed to the state. All vassals and nobles, officials and visitors were required to make presents to the ruler, which constituted a lucrative source of profit to the state. Salt yielded much money. *Jizya* or poll tax, which was realised from the Hindus, was a very profitable source of income. *Khams*, or one-fifth of the plunder taken during the time of war, went to the royal treasury. It brought in a huge income to the state. The main source of the government revenue, however, was the tax from land and was known as land revenue.

The land revenue administration of Sher Shah was a great improvement upon that of the Sultanate period and constituted his chief title to fame. He had a first hand knowledge of the working of the revenue system in his father's *jagir* in Bihar. On his accession he introduced the system which he had worked out in detail in Sasaram and Khawaspur Tanda. The land was measured according to a uniform system and that under cultivation was ascertained for each village. All cultivable land was divided into three classes, good, middle and bad, and the produce of each kind of land was ascertained. It was then added up and divided by three in order to find out the average produce per *bigha* of land. One-third of the produce was fixed as the state share. The government revenue could be paid either in cash or kind; but the former mode was preferred. The state's share was commuted into cash on the basis of the current prices of corn. There seems to have been a separate schedule for each locality and a separate schedule for each kind of corn. One uniform schedule of average produce of land was an impossibility for the simple reason that the quality of land and its produce differed from locality to locality. Similarly, there must have been different price-rates in different localities for the conversion of the state's share of the produce into cash. The state gave *putta* (title deed) to each cultivator, specifying the state demand, that is, revenue that he was required to pay. Every cultivator was required to

sign a *qabuliat* (deed of agreement) signifying his assent to pay the amount of revenue mentioned. Both the documents contained a specification of the plots and their areas in the possession of a cultivator. It is too much to think that Sher Shah established a uniform method of assessment throughout his dominions. We know from recorded evidence that he made exception in the case of Multan where he did not insist on the survey of land. Similarly, it would not have been possible for him to have introduced survey in Rajasthan. It is, therefore, reasonable to hold that all the three modes of assessment were allowed to prevail as before. They were (1) *ghalla-bakhshi* or *batai*, (2) *nasq* or *muktai* or *kankut*, (3) *naqdi* or *zabti* or *jamai*. *Batai* means sharing the produce with the peasant, and this mode of determining the state's share seems to have been primitive and popular in all ages. Batai is of three kinds : *khet-batai, lank-batai* and *rasi-batai*. The first means the determination of the landlords's share while crop is standing in the field or immediately after the field has been sown, by a division of the field itself. According to the second (*lank-batai*), the peasant reaps the corn and brings it to the threshing ground where it is divided between him and the landlord without the grain being separated from the husk. The third (*rasi-batai*) means dividing the grain after it has been separated from the husk. *Nasq* or *kankut* implies a rough estimate of the produce of the soil. It is a cumbrous and disadvantageous mode of assessment for the cultivator. *Naqdi* or *jamai* or *zabti* is a sort of contract between the individual peasant and the government or the *zamindar*, as the case may be, which fixes the rate of the rent per *bigha* of land per year, irrespective of crops or total produce, for three years or more. The rate depends upon the fertility of the soil and its situation. The tenant is at liberty to raise more than one crop a year, and he can expect no remission for the failure of crop owing to a draught, excessive rain or any other natural calamity. Nor is the rent enhanced during the period of contract, even if the crops raised are far more rich than the average. Of the three systems *naqdi* or *jamai* has always been preferred by the peasants and *kankut* is the least liked by them. Over and above the land revenue proper (1/3rd of the produce), the peasantry was required to contribute towards the maintenance and fees of the surveyors of land and the collectors of revenue when they were on active duty. This additional charge was known as *jaribana* (surveyors' fee) and *mahasilana* (tax-collectors' fee) and probably it ranged from $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ to 5% of revenue

paid by each cultivator. In addition to these every cultivator was required to pay an additional cess of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the entire revenue payable by him. It was something like an insurance fund which was realised in kind. The grain so collected was stored in state granaries and was sold at a cheap price in times of famine or other natural calamity.

Sher Shah had great solicitude for the welfare of the peasantry. No other ruler of medieval India, except Firoz Tughluq, attempted to safeguard the interests of the teeming millions as this Pathan king who believed that the state was invariably benefitted by the favour shown to the agriculturists. He gave standing orders to his officers to be lenient at the time of assessment and to be strict at the time of collection of revenue. He never failed to punish those who oppressed the peasantry and made due compensation, if during the course of the march of his army standing crops were trodden under or damaged on account of any other reason.

The main defect of the system was that in charging one-third of the average produce of the three kinds of land the third category of land was over-charged, while the first category was under-charged. But, as Moreland says, the inequality might probably have adjusted itself "by variations in the crops grown". Secondly, the state demand of one-third of the produce together with the fees of the surveyors and collectors and the additional cess of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ constituted a fairly high charge. Thirdly, the settlement, being annual, must have caused some kind of inconvenience to the cultivators as well as to the government officials. Fourthly, it is idle to expect that all corruption in the revenue department had altogether disappeared. Service in this department was more lucrative than in other departments, and Sher Shah transferred his officers every one or two years to give a chance "to a large number of men to share the benefits and profits of *amildari*". Fifthly, the *jagir* system continued to exist and it seems hardly credible that *jagirdars* were not allowed to manage their *jagirs* through their agents. As there were *jagirs* in every part of the kingdom, cultivators in *jagir* areas must have naturally suffered.

But, on the whole, the tillers of the soil must not have suffered much, as Sher Shah was personally anxious to advance their interest and severely punished all those who oppressed or harassed them in any way. He practically eliminated the authority of the intermediary headman, if he did not do away with them altogether. In fact, he

established a direct relation between the individual cultivator and the state. His revenue system was *rayatwari*, not *zamindari*.

The main items of expenditure were the royal household and the civil and military establishments. A considerable portion of the income must have been spent on building projects and on the construction of roads, *sarais* and other works of public utility. As Sher Shah was engaged in military campaigns throughout his reign, he must have spent large amounts of money on his wars. Charitable institutions also must have taken their due share of the royal income. The 'charity kitchens', alone, as we have pointed out elsewhere, cost to the exchequer Rs. 18,25,000 a year.

Currency.

Sher Shah's next outstanding achievement was in the field of currency reform. He found on his accession that the currency system had practically broken down for want of specie, the debasement of the current coins and the absence of a fixed ratio between the coins of various metals. There was another difficulty, namely, that coins of all previous reigns, in fact of all ages, were allowed to circulate as legal tender. Sher Shah took steps to issue a large number of new silver coins which, subsequently, became known as *dam*. Both the silver rupee and the copper *dam* had their halves, quarters, eighths and sixteenths. Next, he abolished all old and mixed metal currency. He fixed a ratio between the copper and silver coins. His silver rupee weighed 180 grains of which 175 grains were pure silver. This rupee *minus* its inscription lasted throughout the Mughul period and was retained by the English East India Company upto 1835. V.A. Smith rightly observes : it "is the basis of the existing British currency" (upto 1947). Sher Shah's name and title and the place of mint were invariably inscribed on the coins in Arabic character. Some of his coins bore his name in Devanagari script and some had the names of the first four Khalifas in addition. Gold coins of pure metal of various weights, such as 166·4 grains, 167 grains and 168·5 grains, were executed. The ratio of exchange beween the *dam* and the rupee was 64 to 1. The ratios between the various gold coins and the silver ones were fixed on a permanent basis. These currency reforms proved very useful and did away with a great deal of inconvenience which was experienced by the general public and particularly by the trading community. These reforms have elicited high praise from modern numismatists. Edward Thomas, for example, observes that Sher

Shah's reign "constitutes an important test-point in the annals of Indian coinage, not only in its specific mint reforms but also as correcting the progressive deteriorations of the previous kings, and as introducing many of those reforms which the succeeding Mughuls claimed as their own."

Trade and commerce.

Sher Shah greatly encouraged commerce by abolishing numerous duties that were charged on the boundaries of every province, every district, and, in fact, at every ferry and every prominent road. He laid down that only two duties should be charged on the transport of goods intended for sale. One duty was charged when the mercantile commodities entered the frontier of his kingdom at Sonargaon in East Bangal or at Rohtasgarh in the Panjab or at any other frontier, and the other at the place of its sale. We do not know the exact amount charged; it seems probable that the tax was $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the price of the articles. All internal customs houses were abolished. This reform encouraged trade and commerce and brought about a great commercial prosperity.

Justice.

Sher Shah is reputed to be a just medieval ruler. His reputation was based not only on his personal solicitude for the welfare of his subjects but also on his efficient system of administration of justice. In accordance with the immemorial custom he himself tried both appeals and initial cases. He held court in the evening of Wednesday. Next to him was the chief *qazi* of the kingdom who was the head of the department of justice and was responsible for its administration. The chief *qazi's* court was primarily an appellate court, but cases in the first instance, too, were decided by it. There was a *qazi* in every district and perhaps in all the important cities. The chief *munsif* was responsible for administering civil justice in the district, while the *amins* discharged the same duty in the *parganas*. Probably *qazis* tried the criminal cases, while the *munsifs* and *amins* civil cases. There was another judicial dignitary called *Mir Adl*.

Sher Shah was inspired by high ideals of justice. He was very particular in giving all protection to the poor and the weak and to save them from oppression and injustice. He invariably followed the principle of being more severe in the cases of government officials

or highly-placed persons than for smaller and poorer persons. Moreover, he showed no preference even for his near relatives in the matter of administering justice. An anecdote is recorded how he inflicted a condign punishment on his nephew who had thrown a betel leaf at the wife of a goldsmith who was taking her bath in the enclosure of her house. This incident occurred while the prince was passing by the house on his elephant. In spite of the remonstrance of his nobles Sher Shah did not desist from inflicting the punishment. Similar other instances of Sher Shah's careful and impartial justice are on record. Shujaat Khan, governor of Malwa, had unjustly withheld a part of the jagirs of 2,000 soldiers. When Sher Shah heard about it he ordered due punishment, although Shujaat Khan had, meanwhile, rectified his mistake by restoring the jagirs. It has already been mentioned that Sher Shah was particularly solicitous for the welfare of the peasantry and that he made due compensation for the injury done to their crops during the course of the march of his army. The reputation of Sher Shah as a just king survived long after his death and the downfall of his dynasty. Nizamuddin Ahmad, author of *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, wrote in the last quarter of the sixteenth century that during Sher Shah's reign a merchant could travel and sleep in the desert, without any fear of being robbed of his merchandise. So great was Sher Shah's fear and his love of justice that the very robbers and thieves kept watch over the merchants' goods.

Police.

There was no separate department of police in the time of Sher Shah. The army was required to discharge a double duty, namely, protecting the country from foreign invasions and internal disturbances, and keeping peace between man and man. The *chief shiqdar's* duty was to maintain peace and order in the *sarkar*. In fact he was the guardian of peace in his jurisdiction. The shiqdar in the *pargana* exercised the same function. These officers were required to keep a strict watch on thieves, robbers and other bad characters in their respective areas and to punish them. So far as villages were concerned, Sher Shah introduced the principle of local responsibility and made the headman of the village responsible for all the crimes committed in his village. The headman was given time to produce the culprit or to make good the loss due to theft or robbery. If he failed to do so he was to put to death. If the crime was committed on the border of more than one village the headmen of the villages

concerned were responsible for the detection of the crime and for making good the loss. The system was based on the correct knowledge of the rural psychology and the condition of the people of medieval times. As a general rule, the headman of a village was well-acquainted with the bad characters of his village and hardly any offence occurred without his knowledge. But the punishment of death for failure to trace the culprit seems too severe in our eyes. Dr. Qanungo, however, justifies it, for he says that it was well-suited for the age that was medieval.

Medieval historians are all praise for Sher Shah's police administration. Abbas Sarwani writes: "Travellers and way-farers during the time of Sher Shah's reign were relieved from the trouble of keeping watch, nor did they fear to halt in the midst of a desert. They encamped at night at every place, desert or inhabited, without any fear; they placed their goods and property on the plain and turned out their mules to graze, and they slept with minds at ease and free from care, as if in their own houses, and the zamindars for fear any mischief should occur to the travellers, and that they should suffer to be arrested on account of it, kept watch over them. And in the time of Sher Shah's rule a decrepit old woman might place a basket full of gold ornaments on her head and go on a journey and no thief or robber would come near her, for fear of punishment which Sher Shah inflicted." (Elliot, Vol. IV, pp. 432-433).

We know little about the police arrangements in the cities. There must have been an officer corresponding to the *kotwal* of the Mughul age in every important town to maintain peace and to keep unruly people in check. The capital city must have been provided with a suitable police administration. We are, however, ignorant of the precise details.

Roads and Sarais.

Sher Shah was a great road-maker. Following in the footsteps of the ancient Hindu kings, he constructed many roads in order to connect his capital with the various parts of his dominions. Four of his roads are well-known. One, which ran from Sonargaon in East Bangal through Agra, Delhi and Lahore to the Indus, was 1,500 *kos* in length. It was known as *Sarak-i-Azam* and might be identified with the modern Grand Trunk Road. The second ran from Agra

to Burhanpur, a third from Agra to Jodhpur and Chittor, and a fourth from Lahore to Multan. All the roads were well-planned and connected important towns of the country through which they passed. On either side of the roads Sher Shah planted fruit-trees. Along the roads were built 1,700 *caravan sarais* with separate quarters for Hindus and Muslims. Provision was made to station horses for the servants of the postal or news department. Each *sarai* had a well and a mosque with an *imam* and a *muazzin*. There was a police official (shiqdar) posted at every *sarai* for keeping peace and preventing crime. Besides being useful for travellers, the *sarais* were particularly meant to serve as rest-houses for the servants and runners of the postal department who carried the royal mail. They were provided ration and, as this class comprised both Hindus and Muslims, there were separate arrangements for their food. Some lands in the vicinity of each *sarai* was endowed for its maintenance. In the words of Dr. Qanungo these *sarais* were "veritable arteries of the empire" and the roads and *sarais* were "essential to the success of Sher Shah's administration, characterized as it was by frequent transfer of officials, prompt discharge of business and constant marching and re-marching of troops". The roads and *sarais* were useful not only for the transport of troops but they also served the purpose of *dak chaukis* of postal department, supplying the government with news from distant parts of the kingdom. The system was not new to this country, but it was revived and improved by Sher Shah.

Intelligence department.

Sher Shah revived the *dak chauki* and the espionage system of Alauddin Khalji. He appointed an officer known as *Darogha-i-Dak Chauki* as the head of this department. Hosts of news-writers and news-carriers were employed under him to furnish news of important happenings from every part of the empire. As has been stated, the royal *dak* was carried by runners posted at the *sarais*. Sher Shah kept himself in touch with every part of his kingdom through the intelligence department. Daily reports of the prices of things also reached the king. News-runners and spies were posted in all important towns and bazars with instructions to transmit to the court whatever information they thought necessary to be placed before the king. This department worked so efficiently that Sher Shah got news of dissatisfaction of soldiers employed in the provinces and rebellious intentions of the zamindars and bigger vassals before these became known in the

areas concerned. The case of Shujaat Khan's unjustly withholding a part of the *jagirs* of his 2,000 soldiers and the latter's dissatisfaction which reached Sher Shah through his spies even before Shujaat Khan could know of it is an instance in point. Much of the success of Sher Shah's administration was due to the efficiency of his spy system.

Religious policy.

Modern scholars hold divergent views about Sher Shah's religious policy. Dr. Qanungo credits him with following an enlightened policy of toleration towards the Hindus. According to him his attitude towards Hinduism "was not contemptuous sufferance but respectful deference". Prof. Sri Ram Sharma, on the other hand, contends that in his religious views and conduct Sher Shah did not rise above the Turko-Afghan rulers of the Sultanate of Delhi. It is admitted by all, including the two historians referred to, that in his private life Sher Shah was an orthodox Sunni Musalman. He was punctilious in saying his five daily prayers, in keeping the fast of *Ramzan* and in going through various observances enjoined by his faith. He was, moreover, an up-holder of the dignity and supremacy of Islam in this country. On more than one occasion he successfully exploited the religious feelings of his Muslim followers by declaring a *holy war* against Rajput kings. His war against Puran Mal of Raisin was undertaken to punish him for his 'excess' against Islam and it was officially termed as 'jihad'. His expedition against Maldeva of Jodhpur, though dictated by political and military motives was, nevertheless coloured by religious sentiments, and after his victory Sher Shah demolished temples in the fort at Jodhpur and built a mosque on their site. Similarly, in the siege of Kalinjar he did give vent to religious intolerance. It will not be correct to say that Sher Shah was altogether free from religious bias or that his attitude towards Hinduism was one of "respectful deference". At the same time, it is a mistake to place him in the category of the sultans of the pre-Mughul period, who, with a few notable exceptions, looked upon Hindus as an inferior people and their religion not worthy of recognition or toleration. Sher Shah's personal feelings and views apart, he was, on the whole, a tolerant ruler and did not think it wise to follow a policy of religious persecution. He left Hindus undisturbed and allowed them to follow their own religion without let or hindrance. As far as possible, he did not mix religion with politics. Leaving

aside cases of exhibition of bigotry during a campaign against a Hindu king no attempt was made throughout his reign to break images or to demolish temples or to carry on an organised propaganda against the Hindus. Although the employment of Hindus in the army and the revenue department need not be taken as an evidence of his policy of tolerance, (as Hindus had been employed in these departments since the establishment of the Arab rule in Sindh in the eighth century A.D. owing to political and administrative necessity), a large portion of Sher Shah's infantry was composed of Hindus. Most of the subordinate officers employed in the revenue and intelligence departments must have been Hindus. In normal circumstances, therefore, Sher Shah may be said to have been tolerant towards the religion of the vast majority of his subjects.

Buildings.

Sher Shah was a great builder. Anxious to strengthen the defence of his north-west frontier, he built a magnificent fort on the Jhelam and named it Rohtasgarh. Dr. Qanungo says that he wanted to build a fort in every *sarkar* and to convert the mud sarais into brick buildings so as to make them serve as block-houses for the protection of the highways. But this work could not be accomplished owing to the shortness of his reign. The *Purana Qila* at Delhi is said to have been built by Sher Shah and he erected a lofty mosque inside its enclosure, which is considered to be a good example of the Indo-Islamic architecture. According to Fergusson, it is "the most perfect of his (Sher Shah's) buildings". The best example of Sher Shah's architecture is his own mausoleum at Sasaram in Bihar. It is a grand architecture of its kind in the country. "The short-lived and unstable Sur dynasty," writes V.A. Smith, "of which Sher Shah was the most distinguished member, had such a hard fight for existence that it could not have been expected to pay much attention to architecture. Nevertheless several meritorious buildings are due to the Sur dynasty, and the mausoleum of Sher Shah at Sasaram, built on a lofty plinth in the midst of a lake, is one of the best designed and most beautiful buildings in India, unequalled among the early buildings in the northern provinces for grandeur and dignity. Cunningham was half-inclined to prefer it to even the Taj....The style may be described as intermediate between the austerity of the Tughluq buildings and the feminine grace of Shah Jahan's masterpiece." (*History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, pp. 405-406). According to

Havel this mausoleum is a portrait of Sher Shah's personality and character. Dr. Qanungo adds that while the outer portion of the building, which is rather rough, indicates the frowning exterior of Sher Shah's character, its beautiful interior "speaks of a heart overflowing with kindness". Percy Brown also lavishes praise on Sher Shah's buildings for their exquisite design, excellent execution and artistic decoration. He considers the Sur style of architecture not only as a substantial improvement on that of the Sayyids and the Lodis, but also as the basis of the grand and more dignified architecture of the Mughuls.

Sher Shah's Character and Estimate.

His daily routine. Sher Shah was the only Muslim sultan of northern India who rose to sovereignty without having in his early life any substantial connection with the court of Delhi. He began his career as a civilian manager of his father's *jagir*, and by sheer dint of merit rose to be the emperor of Hindustan. No ruler in India before or after him possessed at the time of his accession to the throne such intimate knowledge of all branches of administration as this Pathan monarch. Sher Shah became king at the ripe age of sixty-eight. Although he is said to have remarked that God had granted him sovereignty in the evening of his life, age had not cooled his ambition and he manifested a physical and intellectual activity that could well be an object of emulation for a youth of twenty-five. Historians are unanimous in their testimony to the fact that he devoted more than sixteen hours a day to the business of the State. Like Asoka or Chandragupta Maurya before him and Akbar after him, he believed in the motto that "It behoves the great to be always active". Both Abbas Sarwani and Rizaq-Ullah Mushtaqi tell us that it was Sher Shah's habit to get up after two-thirds of the night were passed. After ablution and prayer he would sit down to attend to the business of the State. First of all, secretaries of various departments came and read their reports about the occurrences in their respective departments. "For four hours he listened to the reading of reports on affairs of the country or on the condition of government establishments. Orders that he gave were reduced to writing, and were issued and acted upon; there was no need for further discussion. Thus he remained busy till the morning (*fajar*) arrived." (*Waqayat-i-Mushtaqi* in *Elliot*, Vol. IV,

p. 550). After the morning prayer, he went out for an inspection of the army. Musters of troops were held in his presence. Fresh recruits were enlisted, their descriptive rolls taken down and horses branded. Then came the time for breakfast. That over, he held *darbar* and there openly transacted business till mid-day. The main work that engaged his attention was receiving nobles and vassals and envoys from foreign courts. He also inspected the revenue received from various *parganas* and looked into the accounts of income and expenditure. Then he sat down for another prayer at noon and retired for rest. Unless an important business needed his personal attention he spent his evenings in reading the Quran and in the company of learned men. This was the daily routine of his life. There was hardly any deviation from it whether Sher Shah was at his capital or engaged in a military campaign.

As a man. Not having been born in the purple and having had to make his way in life through adversity, Sher Shah did not possess the culture and personal charm of a born aristocrat. Moreover, we now know from Tarikh-i-Daulat-i-Sher Shahi of Hasan Ali Khan, a first-rate contemporary Persian authority that in his youth Sher Shah was frivolous and his morals were those of a spoiled young man. He cannot be described as a dutiful son, for he had serious differences with his father who was passionately attached to his step-mother. Little is known about his attitude towards his mother. It may, however, he surmised that they might have had mutual attachment as fellow-sufferers due to the indifference of their guardian and head of the family. He does not seem to have had any devotion for his wives for which most of the Mughul rulers, though polygamous like him, have earned praise from posterity. Nor is there any evidence to show that he ever displayed special fondness for his children. It seems that his utilitarian outlook in his dealings with men and affairs stood in the way of his having any inordinate attachment for anyone.

Though well-educated and possessed of a good knowledge of Arabic and Persian and fond of history, Sher Shah could not, in any sense, be called a scholar. For him study of literature and history was not an end in itself. He cultivated them for their practical utility. He read the Quran every day, because it was necessary for a pious

Muhammadan to do so. He was a patron of learned men in the sense in which other Turko-Afghan sultans of Delhi were, but no scholar at his court produced any outstanding work of history, politics, economics or even theology, to say nothing of the sciences. Modern scholars have praised him for his patronage of learning without caring to find out whether it proved efficacious in spreading learning and producing works of merit.* He was, however, a great builder, and his style of architecture was an improvement on that of his predecessors.

As a soldier. As has been pointed out, Sher Shah was not a soldier by profession ; but as he was the son of a military commander and as it was essential for everybody in that age to learn to handle weapons of offence and defence for self-protection, Sher Shah must have received military training in his boyhood. His expeditions against the rebellious *zamindars* in his father's *jagir* show that he very well understood the work of a seasoned soldier and commander. As a soldier, he possessed cool courage, personal valour and extraordinary patience and activity. As a general, he invariably displayed consummate skill and cunning in every campaign. At every stage of his halt during a campaign, he invariably threw up redoubts and dug ditches by way of precaution against a surprise attack. Never did he make a frontal attack on his enemy. Tactics that he usually followed were to throw the enemy off his guard, to make a surprise attack to draw him away into an ambush and then to attack him simultaneously from more than one direction. His campaigns were characterised by rapidity of movements and by an attempt to gain a strategic advantage over his enemy. Unlike the Rajputs, he did not risk his all on the issue of a single battle except once, namely, in his contest with Maldeva of Jodhpur. Even there he quickly extricated himself by a cunning stratagem. Like all Turks and Afghans, he fought to win and believed that he could legitimately use any means, fair or foul, to attain his object. He was ever ready to share with his soldiers the toils of a campaign and the joys and sorrows of fortune. He did not avoid their company but mixed with them on intimate terms. When Humayun's emissaries visited him on the eve of the battle of

*Malik Muhammad Jayasi, a notable writer who flourished during his time, was not known at his court and was not extended any patronage by Sher Shah.

Chausa, they found him digging a trench with his sleeves rolled up, along with his troops. He had a leader's personal magnetism and was loyally served by his men.

As an administrator. Sher Shah was a constructive genius of a high order. Like Akbar, he combined in him the capacity of grasping broad original principles of administration with a knowledge of minute details. To him belonged the credit of not only reviving the old and tried institutions of the land, but also administering them successfully and even improving them by eliminating deficiencies and adding new elements. His re-organization of administration, settlement of land revenue and currency and commercial reforms entitle him to the rank of one of the greatest administrators of the medieval age. The most remarkable thing about him as a ruler was the spirit in which his administration was made to function. The result was that the old institutions were in actual practice, transformed to serve the larger interests of the people. Sher Shah was a successful statesman. He cleverly perceived the defects in the Mughul system of government and cleverly turned them to his advantage. He realised what the main elements of power in the country were and enlisted the support of almost all those elements in the furtherance of his own object. As far as the Afghans were concerned, he successfully curbed their tribal jealousies and kept their turbulence under proper check. He inspired them with a common ideology and ambition and made them place the national interests above those of the clan or the family. The Afghan individualistic tendency remained under check throughout his rule. No Afghan ruler had attained such a remarkable success in this difficult task as Sher Shah. As a ruler, he stood for the welfare of the people and worked hard to safeguard the interests of the peasantry. No oppression of any kind and no encroachment on the rights of agricultural community were tolerated and care was taken to compensate the peasantry for any damage or loss done to their crops. Though orthodox in his religious beliefs and practices and often exploiting the fanaticism of the Muslim soldiery in his wars against powerful Hindu kings, he did not show religious intolerance in his dealings with the Hindu subjects. There was enough of statesmanship in him not to mix religion with politics or administration. He had foreseen the impossibility of neglecting the Hindus, and, therefore, sought their co-operation in the civil and military administration.

The most important trait in Sher Shah's character as a ruler was his love of justice. He used to say: "Justice is the most excellent of religious rites and it is approved alike by the kings of infidels and of the faithful." He looked upon it as his duty to ascertain the exact truth about the oppressed and the suitors for justice, and he invariably administered even-handed justice. He showed no leniency to oppressors even though they might have been his nobles or his near relations. The anecdote about his nephew's making an amorous advance towards the wife of a goldsmith at Agra and the punishment that Sher Shah inflicted on him has been given elsewhere. It might not be literally true; nevertheless, it reflects popular tradition about Sher Shah's desire to do justice even though he might have to punish his own kinsmen.

Sher Shah followed in the footsteps of most of the kings of ancient India who pursued the benevolent policy of helping the poor and the disabled. A large amount of money was disbursed in charity. We are told that a register of the names of the poor people in the kingdom was maintained and arrangements were made for providing them with means of subsistence. Sher Shah established a 'charity kitchen' at the capital on which 500 *tolas* of gold were spent everyday. Whoever came to the court was fed. This charity alone cost the treasury Rs. 18,25,000 per year. An account has already been given of his roads with shade-giving fruit-trees and his *sarais* for the comfort of travellers. Humanitarian measures like these were designed to help the teeming millions, besides facilitating the transport of the royal armies and the expeditious conduct of the royal *dak*.

Sher Shah's success was so dazzling that most writers have failed to see the other side of his character. It is not generally realised that he was a cunning politician and that he often made use of guile and treachery in attaining his end. He acquired the fort of Chunar by questionable means. In flagrant violation of his plighted word he seized the fort of Rohtasgarh from its ruler. Like Aurangzeb after him he often had recourse of stratagem. He beat his rival Maldeva by forging letters and sowing dissensions among his chiefs. His rise was as much due to his intrinsic ability as to his consummate and unscrupulousness.

Place in History.

Sher Shah was a most remarkable ruler of medieval India in

administrative ability, strength of character and actual achievements. He challenges comparison with the greatest medieval Indian despot, Alauddin Khalji, who, in sheer ability, both as a conqueror and administrator, was undoubtedly superior; but in constructive statesmanship inferior to this Afghan monarch. Sher Shah's administrative work was more enduring and also more beneficial than that of Ala-ud-din. His institutions served the public good and have given their author a permanent place in the history of the country. It will be unjust to compare him with Akbar who was distinctly superior both as a ruler and as a man. The theory that "Sher Shah may justly dispute with Akbar the claim of being the first who attempted to build up an Indian nation by reconciling the followers of the rival creeds" seems to be rather a tall one. There is little evidence to show that he wanted to build up an Indian nation. In fact, he had no clear idea of what a nation was. The argument that "the experiment of abolition of *Jizya* and cow-slaughter would have been extremely injudicious in an age which still breathed the atmosphere of Sultan Sikandar's reign" is also not sound. In an earlier century Zain-ul-Abdin (1420-1470) of Kashmir had successfully tried this experiment after the extremely intolerant reign of his father, another Sikandar, known as 'Idol Breaker', and deservedly won the title of 'Akbar of Kashmir' from the grateful posterity. The truth, therefore, is that Sher Shah never really dreamt of building up an Indian nation. It will not be doing justice to the memory of Akbar to suggest that because "the relations between the Hindus and the Indian Muhammadans were not less cordial at the accession of Akbar than at the time of his death" his policy was unwise or foolish. It is a matter of common knowledge with us that the relations between the two communities were less cordial during the best days of Indian nationalism with the apostle of truth, non-violence and Hindu-Muslim unity at the head, than during the gloomy days of the stifling British supremacy in the country. For this strange phenomenon, however, no impartial student of history would blame Mahatma Gandhi. In both the cases the fault lay with the grasping and aggressive character and extra-territorial affiliations of the Muslim community which would hardly believe in mutual adjustment as long as it could be possible to retain its old supremacy or manage to establish a fresh one. Sher Shah was guided by the motive of enlightened self-interest rather than by 'his national patriotism', as a modern writer* has wrongly asserted.

* S.R. Sharma, vide his Crescent in India.

It has yet to be proved that any Muslim ruler of India, with the exception of Akbar, was ever inspired by 'national patriotism' for this land. Moreover, India was not Sher Shah's "patria" and we know that like other Afghan monarchs he had invited his fellow Afghans from Afghanistan and distributed land in this country among them not only to strengthen his own position but also as a duty.

Sher Shah's indefatigable industry, devotion to duty, numerous reforms and love of justice have secured for him a place of distinction in Indian history. No medieval Indian monarch except Akbar the Great, had so much positive contribution for the welfare of the people to his credit. Whether judged as a leader of men or as a builder of institutions or as an administrator or statesman he stands head and shoulder above his predecessors. Despite the eulogy of Afghan writers and some recent historians, his administration was not perfect and, therefore, not above criticism, yet it was designed to further the interests of the people as much as, if not more than, that of the monarch himself. The present writer is unable to agree with the late Sir Woolseley Haig's opinion that he was "the greatest of the Muslim rulers of India". But his place in our medieval Indian history is very high indeed. It is next to that of Akbar who, as Dr. Qanungo rightly observes, "is justly entitled to a higher place in history than Sher Shah".

ISLAM SHAH (1545-1553)

Early career.

Islam Shah's original name was Jalal Khan and he was the younger son of Sher Shah. As he was a fairly well-educated man and a poet in Persian at the time of his accession, it may be presumed that he must have been given a fairly high education in his early years. But he was primarily a soldier and had given proof of his military ability on more than one occasion before he was called to the sovereignty of Hindustan. In 1531 his valiant defence of Chunargarh so impressed Humayun that on the conclusion of peace the latter insisted on Jalal Khan's taking charge of the Afghan contingent which Sher Shah had placed at the disposal of the Mughul emperor. In 1537 he played a prominent part in the siege of Gaur, and was subsequently entrusted with the defence of Teliagarhi, the gateway to Bangal, where the Afghans under him inflicted the first

defeat upon the Mughul army. In 1539 and 1540 he was placed in charge of an important division of his father's army in the battles of Chausa and Kanauj, and in both the engagements he displayed great valour and military capacity. He co-operated with his father in the campaigns against the rulers of Raisin and Jodhpur. While Sher Shah was engaged in the siege of Kalinjar, Jalal was deputed to reduce Rewa, but this work could not be accomplished due to Sher Shah's untimely death.

We have little evidence to form an estimate of Islam Shah's administrative achievements before his accession. Certain it is that he must have been employed by his father in settling the country and in helping him in the enforcement of his varied reforms. Islam Shah must have, therefore, acquired a considerable administrative experience before 1545.

Accession and struggle with Adil Khan.

When Sher Shah was burnt to death at Kalinjar on 22nd May, 1545, his eldest son, Adil Khan, was at Ranthambhor and Jalal Khan at Rewa, 85 miles south-east of Kalinjar. Although the deceased monarch had nominated Adil as his heir-apparent, his nobles preferred Jalal Khan who was industrious and skilled in arms, while his elder brother was ease-loving and devoted to pleasures. Moreover, Jalal was nearer at hand, and it was then thought dangerous to keep the throne vacant for long. So the nobles, headed by Isa Khan Hajib, sent a messenger to Jalal Khan to come immediately to take his father's place as king. Jalal reached Kalinjar on May 27, 1545 and was crowned the same day. He assumed the title of Islam Shah.

He began his reign by putting the Chandel ruler of Kalinjar, Kirat Singh, and his seventy principal followers to death. In order to enlist the support of the army he paid it two months' salary in cash of which one month's was by way of reward. Next, he promoted all the 6,000 soldiers of his personal army which he had maintained as a prince—the ordinary soldiers being raised to the status of officers and officers to that of *amirs*. This unwise measure caused dissatisfaction among the old nobility. Some of the disaffected nobles turned secretly to Adil Khan. The king, feeling suspicious, wrote to his brother to come to Agra, to which town he himself had proceeded soon after his accession, and take charge of the kingdom which was his by

right. As eminent nobles like Qutub Khan Naib, Isa Khan Niyazi, Khawas Khan and Jalal Khan Julwani stood surety for his life, Adil Khan set out from Ranthambhor. But while at Agra, Islam Shah hatched an unsuccessful plot against his life. Adil, therefore, thought it better to accept the governorship of a small province, and retired to Bayana, which was assigned to him by the king. In spite of the apparent reconciliation, the quarrel between the two brothers continued and Islam Shah sent an assassin to Bayana to take Adil's life. The four nobles, who had stood surety for Adil's life, considering it a breach of trust on the part of the king, secretly threw themselves on the side of his elder brother. Adil Khan revolted and, accompanied by Khawas Khan, proceeded to attack Agra; but he was defeated in a battle outside the town and fled to Panna and was not heard of anymore. His supporters, Khawas Khan and Isa Khan, retreated to Mewat (Alwar). Islam Shah now sent an army in pursuit of the two rebellious nobles which was, however, defeated in an encounter at Firozpur in Mewat. The king, therefore, sent another force which compelled Khawas Khan and Isa Khan to flee to the Kamaun hills to take refuge with the local raja.

The suppression of old nobles.

Islam Shah grew suspicious of most of the nobles. On his way to Chunar he put Jalal Khan Julwani and his brother, Khudadad Khan, to death. Qutub Khan, who too was a supporter of Adil, was seized with panic and fled to Lahore to take shelter with Haibat Khan Niyazi, the governor of that province. Haibat Khan delivered him to the king. Qutub Khan, with several other nobles, was sent as prisoner to the fort of Gwalior and there they were blown up by gun-powder. This struck terror into the hearts of the nobles.

(i) The Niyazi rebellion.

The strict measures against those who were suspected of complicity in the rebellion of Adil Khan alarmed the old nobility and revived tribal jealousies which had been successfully kept under check by Sher Shah. The Niyazis became particularly disaffected. Said Khan Niyazi, becoming alarmed, fled to join his brother, Haibat Khan Niyazi, governor of Lahore, and persuaded the latter to lead the revolt against Islam Shah. Khawas Khan, too, joined the rebels. The situation became so menacing that Islam Shah proceeded in person to suppress the rebellion. The rebels met the king at Ambala

(1547). Khawas Khan, who had joined the Niyazis, withdrew on the eve of the battle, as Haibat Khan, who was fired with the ambition of becoming king, had declared that the "crown was the prize of the sword", while Khawas was still a supporter of Adil Khan. In the battle the Niyazis were defeated. Islam Shah pursued them as far as the Jhelam. Leaving a force, he returned to Agra. This army inflicted a defeat on the rebels at Dungot (Dhankot) on the Indus and compelled the Niyazis to take shelter with the Gakkhars. Haibat Khan, persisting in his ambition to retrieve his position, appeared in the region of the Indus; but he was again defeated and his mother and daughters were taken prisoners. Islam Shah insulted and dishonoured them for two years and then put them to death. Those of the Niyazis who took refuge with the Gakkhars were exterminated, but only after two years' warfare. Haibat Khan was lucky to escape to Kashmir. He intervened in a dispute between Mirza Haider, the then ruler of Kashmir, and the Chakk tribe. The Chakks after their victory over Mirza Haidar, attacked Haibat Khan. The Niyazis fought bravely but were all slain.

Islam Shah had come into conflict with the Gakkhars who had given shelter to the Niyazis. The Gakkhar chief, Sultan Adam, was an ally of Humayun and there appeared to be disquieting prospect of the formation of a coalition between him, Humayun, Kamran and Mirza Haidar against Islam Shah. The latter took pains to prevent such a contingency and built a chain of fortresses for defence (on the eastern bank of the Chinab and 90 miles north-east of Sialkot) and named it Mankot. Although the Gakkhars could not be completely subdued, Islam Shah had the satisfaction of seeing that the Niyazis had met their doom and his enemies had failed to make a common cause against him. Freed from anxiety, he turned his attention towards other problems.

(ii) Rebellion of Shujaat Khan.

Shujaat Khan, who was a top-ranking noble and also governor of Malwa since the time of Sher Shah, had grown disaffected owing to the new king's policy of suspicion and tyranny. Like all other ambitious men, he now wanted to assert his independence. But after the royal victory over the Niyazis at Ambala, he renewed his allegiance and waited on Islam Shah at Gwalior. While there, an attempt was made on his life by a man named Usman; but he was only

wounded. Suspecting the king's complicity in the plot, he departed for his province without leave. Islam Shah invaded Malwa but Shujaat Khan retreated without any battle. He fled to Banswara and finally took refuge in Dungarpur. But as the Niyazi rebellion in the Panjab had not come to an end, Islam thought it expedient to pacify Shujaat. On the request of Daulat Khan Ujiala, son of Shujaat Khan and a boon companion of the king, he forgave him and restored him to a major portion of the province, except the district of Malwa proper which was given to some other official.

(iii) Death of Khawas Khan.

Another great noble of Sher Shah's time was Khawas Khan who was, without doubt, the best soldier and staunchest supporter of the Sur dynasty. Reference has already been made to his taking up the cause of Adil Khan and refusing to make a common cause with Haibat Khan Niyazi at the battle of Ambala. After that event Khawas took refuge with the Raja of Kamaun, who was asked by Islam Shah to surrender the fugitive. But as his request was rejected, Islam Shah entered into communication with Khawas Khan himself. By promising to forgive his offences, he successfully persuaded him to come down to the court. Khawas complied; but as he reached Sirsi, six miles from Sambhal, he was put to death in his tent at night by Taj Khan Karrani, governor of the last named place, at the instigation of the king (1546).

Last days and death.

Islam Shah was not content with the suppression and death of his high nobles at court. He wanted to put down the powerful governors of provinces of his father's time as well. How he reduced Shujaat Khan to submission has already been related. He removed Qazi Fazilat from the governorship of Bangal and appointed Mahmud Khan Sur in his place. In other provinces, too, he appointed men of his own choice after removing the governors of his father's time. He brought East Bangal under his sway. In 1553 Humayun, who had got rid of his ungrateful brother, Kamran, made a feeble attempt to recover Hindustan and as a preliminary step set out to conquer Kashmir. Islam Shah was at this time lying ill at Delhi. When he heard that Humayun had crossed the Indus, he immediately took off leeches from his throat and, though ill, started to face the invader. Humayun was dismayed at the promptitude displayed by

his old rival's son and returned to Kabul. There seemed to be now no danger to the Afghan kingdom and Islam Shah returned to his favourite residence at Gwalior. Here an attempt was made on his life by the disaffected nobility but the plot was soon discovered and the conspirators put to death. This was the second attempt on his life, the first having been made early during his reign. During the later part of his reign Islam Shah passed his days in pleasure and enjoyment. Not long afterwards, however, he was afflicted by a painful disease caused by a tumour in his privy parts. Medical aid proved of no avail and he died on 30th October, 1553.

Administration.

Islam Shah added East Bangal to the territory that he had inherited from his father. Besides, he succeeded in compelling Kashmir to accept his suzerainty. The Sur kingdom, therefore, extended at his death, in 1556, from the Indus on the north-west to the hills of Assam in the east, and from the Himalayas in the north to the Vindhyas in the south. The States of Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur and the provinces of Gujarat and Kathiawar were not included in the empire.

Islam Shah was a good administrator. He took drastic steps to crush the power of the nobles who had acquired the position of privilege and had almost over-shadowed the throne. His theory of kingship was different from that of his father. He did not believe in the Afghan practice of dividing the kingdom among his fellow Afghans. His ideal was nearer to the concept of the divine monarchy of the Mughuls than to the Afghan idea of the king as '*primus inter pares*', for he insisted on unquestionable obedience to his will on the part of his highest nobles. He issued an ordinance that no nobleman was to possess any male elephant. By another edict dancing girls were forcibly taken away from them. He forbade the use of red tents by them, which was the special prerogative of the king. These measures greatly reduced the prestige and pretensions of the nobility. He issued a code of regulations covering eighty sheets of paper which were circulated in every district and *pargana*. He passed many administrative laws and issued detailed instructions for the guidance of his officials. His legislation touched every department and almost every sphere of State activity. He was anxious to see that his officials and people knew their rights as well as their duties. This is borne

out by Badayuni's statement that "all the points of instructions were written in documents whether agreeable to Law (Shariat) or not, so that there was no necessity to refer any such matter to the *Qazi* or *Mufti*, nor was it proper to do so". He allowed the administrative policy of his father to stand, and improved it in some details. In every district throughout his dominion a *darbar* was held on Fridays. Chiefs and officers of the district used to assemble under a canopy to pay obeisance to the shoes and a quiver of Islam Shah which were placed in front of a raised platform resembling the throne. Islam Shah's ordinances were read aloud by the secretary. Nobody was allowed to offend against the majesty of the law. The historian Badayuni, when a boy, was an eye-witness of one of these *darbars* at Bajwara near Bayana, and he records the fact that such *darbars* were held throughout Islam Shah's reign. (Badayuni, Vol. I, pp. 384-385).

While allowing his father's military reforms to continue, he introduced greater order and organization in the army by establishing a graded system which became the basis of Akbar's *mansabdari* system. The lowest unit consisted of 50 troops, the next higher 200, the third 250 and the fourth consisted of 500 troops. There were larger divisions also, such as those of 5,000, 10,000 and 20,000 men. (Badayuni, Vol. I, p. 385).

Sher Shah had built *sarais* at a distance of every four miles along his roads. Islam Shah added one *sarai* between every two *sarais* of his father. In these cooked and uncooked food was kept for Muslim and Hindu employees of the postal department and probably also for the travellers. The building of a *sarai* at every *kos* was an unnecessary waste of tax-payers' money. The foolish practice of distributing charity at these *sarais*, too, seems to have been prompted, as Woolseley Haig writes, by his vanity or jealousy of his father's reputation.

Character.

Islam Shah was a capable soldier, but very cruel and treacherous to his subordinates. Although his policy of abasement of the nobility was unexceptionable, yet it was pursued in a tactless manner. There is no doubt that it caused needless disaffection among the Afghan peers and aroused their latent jealousy, tribal factiousness and turbulence.

His suspicion, cruelty, vindictiveness and narrow-mindedness provoked rebellions which lasted practically throughout his reign. It was, however, fortunate that he possessed the requisite qualities of a successful general which enabled him to suppress his nobility and impose his will upon it.

He was, however, something more than a successful soldier. He was an administrator of marked ability. It has been mentioned that he promulgated administrative laws regardless of the fact whether they came in conflict with the religious prejudices of the age. He may, therefore, be said to be a legislator among the Sultans of Delhi. Laws were made known to the people through the local *darbars* held on Fridays and were rigorously enforced. An anecdote is related that one day one of his *amirs* named Shah Muhammad Farmuli in a humorous vein said to Islam Shah, " Your Majesty! Last night I saw in a dream three bags descend from heaven; in one of which was dust, and in another gold, and in the third paper. The dust fell upon the head of the soldiers, the gold went to the house of the Hindu *daftaris* (clerks) and the paper remained in the royal treasury." (Badayuni, Vol. I, p. 387). Islam Shah understood the hint and promised that after his return to Gwalior, he would look into the soldiers' account and pay them in gold. The story is suggestive and shows that the lot of the soldier was hard, as it was bound to be under the rule of a strong king. It also shows the Afghan envy of the prosperity of Hindu clerks, and that Islam Shah's government was conducted on high bureaucratic principles requiring a vast volume of correspondence.

Islam Shah was a cultured prince. He was well-educated and composed verses in Persian. He took delight in the company of learned men. He loved architecture and erected a few beautiful buildings. Sometimes he took part in theological discussions. Though orthodox in his private life, he was not a religious bigot.

According to Professor N. B. Roy, kingship under him lost its feudal character and became essentially modern. It must, however, be stated that despite his enthusiasm and administrative ability, he was at times cruel and vindictive and aroused the tribal and clannish prejudices of his Afghan peers and, therefore, paved the way for the downfall of his dynasty.

SUCCESSORS OF ISLAM SHAH : CONDITION OF INDIA IN 1553—1555.

FIROZ SHAH, 1553

Islam Shah was succeeded by his son, Firoz, a boy of 12 years. Three days after his accession he was put to death by his maternal uncle, Mubariz Khan, son of Nizam Khan, who was a younger brother of Sher Shah. Islam Shah was aware of Mubariz's ambition and wanted to put him out of his son's way; but he had been prevented from doing so by his wife, Bibi Bai. Mubariz Khan seized the throne, and assumed the title of Muhammad Adil Shah. He was popularly known as Adil.

MUHAMMAD ADIL SHAH, 1553-1557

The new king sought to conciliate the nobility by a lavish distribution of wealth. He appointed Shamsher Khan, brother of Khawas Khan, his *wazir*. But he reposed confidence particularly in Hemu, who had started his life as a hawker of salt in the streets of Rewari and had subsequently been employed in a confidential capacity by Islam Shah. Muhammad Adil Shah was a worthless ruler. He was grossly ignorant and incompetent, and was fond of the company of low people. He was so much addicted to debauchery that he could find little time for attending to business. His indifference gave the ambitious nobles an opportunity to rebel. The first to rebel was Taj Khan Karrani, the murderer of Khawas Khan. The rebel, though defeated at Chhibramau in the modern Hardoi district, was allowed to escape and create a great commotion in Bihar. The next to rebel was Ibrahim Khan Sur, who was son of Ghazi Khan Sur and a brother-in-law of the king. But the king's sister, getting scent of her brother's (Adil's) evil design, helped her husband to escape from the fort of Chunar. He fled to Bayana and defeated a royal army sent against him. Flushed with victory, Ibrahim marched on Delhi and captured it. There he assumed the title of king. Adil made a feeble attempt to recover Delhi, but failed. Ibrahim occupied Agra also.

The third nobleman to revolt was Ahmad Khan Sur, governor of Lahore and another brother-in-law (husband of Adil's sister) of the king. He assumed the title of Sikandar Shah. The fourth important rebel was Muhammad Khan Sur, governor of Bangal, who took up the title of Shams-ud-din Muhammad Shah Ghazi. Northern India was, thus, split up into four kingdoms; namely the Punjab under Sikandar

Shah; Delhi and Agra under Ibrahim Shah; the country from Agra to Bihar under Adil Shah, and Bangal under Muhammad Shah. Each of these four rulers was anxious to establish his supremacy over the others. Owing to a perpetual struggle among them there was great disorder in the country, and small chieftains, such as Ghazi Khan Sur of Bayana, Haji Khan of Alwar and Yahya Turan of Sambhal, became desirous of carving out kindgoms for themselves.

Sikandar Shah of Lahore, fired with the ambition of seizing Delhi, marched against Ibrahim who brought 80,000 men into the field. A battle was fought at Farah, 20 miles north of Agra, in which Ibrahim was defeated (1555). He fled to Etawah and Sikandar obtained possession of Delhi and Agra.

Taking advantage of the discord among the Afghans, Humayun, who had consolidated his position in Kabul, started in November 1554, on a campaign for the reconquest of Hindustan. Tatar Khan Kashi, who held the fort of Rohtasgarh on the Jhelam on behalf of Sikandar, evacuated it as soon as Humayun crossed the Indus. Humayun captured Lahore without opposition on 24th February, 1555. While the Mughuls were invading the Panjab, Sikandar and Ibrahim were fighting each other near Agra. That was why they could offer no effective resistance to the invader. When the Mughuls pushed on towards Delhi after the occupation of the Panjab, Sikandar was roused to a sense of his danger and sent a force to oppose the enemy at Dipalpur, which was defeated. Another Afghan army suffered a defeat at Machhiwara. Sikandar had, therefore, to proceed in person; but he, too, suffered a defeat at Sarhind on 22nd June, 1555, and fled to the hills of the Panjab and the Mughuls took possession of Delhi.

Regardless of the epoch-making events that were taking place in north-western Hindustan, Ibrahim, whose recent defeat had not cooled his ambition, renewed his struggle with Adil Shah. Adil sent Hemu who defeated him near Kalpi and drove him back to Bayana. Ibrahim, however, again met Hemu near Khanua, but was again defeated. Hemu now besieged him in the fortress of Bayana till he was recalled by his master, Adil, who was being threatened by Muhammad Shah of Bangal. The king of Bangal had reduced the country as far as Jaunpur and was proceeding rapidly towards Kalpi in order to occupy Delhi and set himself up as the ruler of Hindustan. Hemu joined Adil Shah at Kalpi and defeated Muhammad Shah of Bangal at

Chhapparghatta, 20 miles from Kalpi, by a surprise attack. Muhammad Shah fled. Adil captured Bangal and appointed Shahbaz Khan its governor. He then returned to Chunar and made it his residence.

The condition of northern India at this time was miserable. Owing to constant warfare, military adventurers had risen in different parts of the country. Their violence and rapacity had so much oppressed the peasantry that cultivation had almost disappeared. A famine broke out; it was particularly severe in the vicinity of Delhi and Agra. Nature also seemed to frown on the warring humanity. There was little rainfall that year. Grain, therefore, became scarce. *Jowar* was sold one seer a rupee and, sometime after, it was not available at all. People were compelled to live on wild herbs and roots. A pestilence broke out and caused havoc among the people. The country was depopulated. Unfortunately, there was an explosion in the old fort of Agra which shook the city to its foundations and killed a large number of people. Such was the condition of India at the time when Humayun recovered his father's throne at Delhi.

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CHAPTER V

AKBAR THE GREAT (1542-1605)

Birth and boyhood.

Akbar was born at the house of Rana Virsal of Amarkot (in the Thar and Parkar district of Sindh) on October 15,* 1542. His parents, Humayun and Hamida Banu Begam, fleeing back from the vicinity of Jodhpur, had taken shelter with the Rajput chief of the place, who generously assisted Humayun with men and material to enable him to lead an expedition against Thatta and Bhakkar. Humayun started on the expedition in the second week of October 1542. On the way, Tardi Beg Khan brought him the joyful news of the birth of his son. Humayun, who was then in a destitute condition and could not reward his followers in a befitting manner, called for a china plate and broke on it a pod of musk and, distributing it among his men, said : "This is all the present I can afford to make you on the birth of my son, whose fame will, I trust, be one day expanded all over the world, as the perfume of the musk now fills this tent."

Akbar's childhood was spent in adversity. His father could make little progress in the expedition against Thatta and Bhakkar. Humayun's men foolishly picked a quarrel with his generous host, Rana Virsal. Owing to the coolness between them, Hamida Banu Begam and Akbar had to be brought on the eighth of December to the town of Jun, 75 miles from Amarkot, where Humayun was then encamped. After more than six months' fruitless endeavour to conquer Sindh, Humayun resolved to proceed to Persia to implore help from the king (Shah Tahmasp) of that country. As the party reached Mustan (Mustang), south of Quetta, news came that Askari was coming to attack them. Humayun, not being in a position to offer resistance, seated Hamida Banu Begam on his own horse and fled in the direction of Kandhar, leaving Akbar, then a baby of one year, behind. Askari

*V. A. Smith gives November 23, which is wrong. See my Paper on 'The Date of Akbar's Birth' in Agra College Journal of History and Political Science, Vol. II (1955) for authorities and the reasons for rejecting Smith's conclusions.

picked up the child and took him to Kandhar where he was well looked after by his wife. After an adventurous journey Humayun reached Persia, and, securing help from the Shah, attacked Kandhar and captured it from his brother, Askari, in September 1545. On November 15, he captured Kabul from Kamran and sent for his son, Akbar, who had been brought from Kandhar to Kabul during the winter of 1544-45. Akbar was then about three years old and, according to Abul Fazl, he recognised his mother at once and jumped into her lap. His first public appearance was made on the occasion of his circumcision in March 1545. Smith's view that he was now named Jalal-uddin Muhammad Akbar in preference to Badru-uddin, which name had been given to him at the time of his birth, is erroneous.

As was usual with princes, Akbar had numerous nurses; some of them actually suckled him, while others only looked after him. The most important among his nurses was Jiji Anaga whose husband, Shams-ud-din who had saved Humayun from drowning after the battle of Kanauj in 1540, was subsequently given the title of Atga (Atkah) Khan. Maham Anaga was his head nurse and her son was the notorious Adham Khan.

Humayun had suffered considerably owing to the inimical conduct of his brothers and had lost and recovered Kabul more than once. In one of the expeditions Kamran had suspended Akbar at the rampart of the city and exposed him to the fire of Humayun's guns. During his father's vicissitudes the child had to lead an unsettled life.

In November 1547, when Akbar was about five years of age, arrangements were made for his education. One after another tutors were appointed, but they failed to teach their pupil reading and writing. He was a truant boy, more fond of sports and animals such as camels, horses, dogs and pigeons, than of studies. From his very boyhood, he possessed a marvellous memory, but would not sit down to learn the alphabet. He, however, became an expert in riding, swordsmanship and other martial exercises. Humayun, who was a scholar of no mean repute, chid Akbar and advised him to spend his time in study. But the parental admonitions proved to be of no avail.

On the death of Hindal, in November 1551, the assignment of Ghazni was conferred upon Akbar and he was betrothed to the daughter of the deceased, Ruqaiya Begam. Akbar took charge of Ghazni

and remained, nominally, its governor till November 1554, when Humayun embarked on an expedition for the reconquest of Hindustan.

A little after Humayun had set out for the reconquest of India, he appointed Munim Khan as Akbar's guardian. On the defeat of Sikandar Sur, a nephew of Sher Shah and one of the claimants of the throne of Delhi, at Sarhind on January 22, 1555, Akbar was credited with the victory in the official records and was formally declared to be the heir-apparent. Within a few months of the re-occupation of Delhi by his father, he was appointed governor of Lahore and the famous Turkoman commander, Bairam Khan, became his guardian in place of Munim Khan. Akbar was then thirteen years of age.

Accession: February 14, 1556.

Humayun died as the result of the fall from the staircase of his library located at *Sher Mandal* in Delhi on 27th January, 1556. His death was concealed and a man was dressed up to impersonate him in order to enable Akbar to crown himself without opposition. The news of his father's death reached Akbar at Kalanaur, fifteen miles west of Gurdaspur, in the Panjab, where he was engaged in operations against Sikandar Sur, who had taken refuge in the fort of Mankot. His guardian Bairam Khan took immediate steps to enthrone him on a brick platform improvised for the occasion and proclaimed him Emperor on February 14, 1556. His accession to the throne had already been proclaimed at Delhi on 11th February, 1556, the very day when Humayun's death was made public.

Condition of India in 1556.

At the time of his accession in 1556 Akbar was only nominally ruler of a small part of the Panjab. Soon after his father's death, Delhi and Agra had been occupied by Hemu and even in the Panjab Akbar's claim was disputed by Sikandar Sur. The territory of Kabul was practically independent under his half-brother, Mirza Hakim. Muhammad Adil Shah and Ibrahim Sur were also disputing Akbar's claim to the sovereignty of Hindustan. The remaining provinces were completely independent under their local rulers. The economic condition of the country was even worse. A wide-spread famine was raging with full fury and devastating the fertile land. The country had also suffered owing to two years' destructive warfare

indulged in by the successors of Islam Shah. The famine was particularly severe in the districts of Delhi and Agra where thousands of men died of starvation. "The capital was devastated and nothing remained but a few houses. An epidemic plague ensued and spread through most of the cities of Hindustan. Multitudes died and men were driven to feed on human flesh, parties being formed to seize and eat solitary victims."

Akbar's precarious position.

Besides the presence of the three Sur rivals, Akbar's greatest enemy was Hemu, the Hindu prime-minister of Muhammad Adil Shah, who was bent upon expelling the Mughuls from India. Akbar had also to deal with the disaffection of some of his own nobles, prominent among whom was Abul-Mali. This half-crazy man had been spoiled by the attention shown to him by Humayun. He refused to attend the "Coronation Darbar" held on 17th February, and behaved with such impropriety that he had to be imprisoned by Bairam Khan in the fort of Lahore. The loyalty of the army, too, was not above suspicion owing to the precarious position of the new monarch.

Though only a little over thirteen years, Akbar was a precocious boy of extraordinary acumen and ability. He resolved to face the situation with courage, and his guardian, Bairam Khan, supported him with unflinching loyalty.

Success of Akbar's principal rival, Hemu.

Adil Shah, who had made Chunar his capital, despatched Hemu to drive the Mughuls out of India. A resident of Rewari, Hemu was a Dhusar Bhargava,* and in his early days used to sell salt in the streets of his town. His first employment in the State service was as a weighman in the market. But, as he possessed remarkable intelligence and tact, he was promoted by Islam Shah who employed him in a confidential capacity at his court. When Adil Shah became king, he promoted Hemu to a position of importance. He thus got an opportunity of making use of his uncommon military and administrative ability. Though a man of humble origin and of puny physique, he possessed a soldier's courage and patience, and was an

*In contemporary chronicles he is called Baqqal or Vaish, but he was, in act, a Bhargava (Brahman of Gaur sub-caste).

able general. As he proved his worth and loyalty, he was promoted to the post of prime-minister, and thus earned the distinction of being the first of the only two Hindus, the other being Todar Mal, who occupied the position of the chief minister of any Muhammadan ruler of Delhi during the medieval period of our country's history. He commanded a large army composed of Afghans and Turks, besides Hindus, and won their loyalty and admiration. He won twenty-two out of the twenty-four battles he fought for his master. He defeated Adil's rival, Ibrahim Sur, more than once, and also Muhammad Shah of Bangal. He was preparing to proceed to attack Agra when Humayun's death occurred. Taking advantage of the incident, he advanced from Gwalior to Agra. Iskandar Khan Uzbeg, governor of the place, took fright and retired towards Delhi without fighting, losing about 3,000 of his men during his retreat. Hemu occupied Agra with its treasure and equipment and proceeded towards Delhi. Tardi Beg Khan, governor of the capital, offered a feeble resistance at Tughlaqabad, 5 miles east of the Qutub Minar, on 7th October, 1556, but was defeated. He fled along with Iskandar Khan towards Sarhind. Ali Quli Khan Shaibani, governor of Sambhal, also abandoned his charge and joined the fugitives.

The entire country from Gwalior to the river Satlaj passed under the control of Hemu. He took the bold step of setting himself up as an independent ruler and carrying out his formal enthronement in the fort of Delhi under the title of Maharaja *Vikramaditya*. He thus became the first and the only Hindu to occupy the throne of Delhi during the medieval period of our history. Modern European writers have joined the medieval chroniclers (whose prejudice to a Hindu, who made any attempt to free his country from foreign yoke, is obvious) in finding fault with him. No impartial student of history, however, can fail to admire Hemu's qualities of leadership and the promptitude with which he seized the opportunity of banishing alien rule from the capital, though, unluckily, his success proved to be short-lived. If foreigners like Humayun and the descendants of Sher Shah could advance claims to the sovereignty of India, Hemu, who was a real native of the soil, had an equally legitimate, if not better, claim to rule over his ancestral land. Had he succeeded in driving the Mughuls out of India, historians would have formed a different opinion about him. The fact that Akbar eventually proved to be a 'national ruler' need not be taken as an argument for the erroneous view that his claims

to the throne of Delhi in 1556 were superior to those of Hemu. The charge of treachery against Adil, who had strangled his nephew to death and occupied his throne, is groundless. Hemu only repudiated his authority, though rebellion and even use of force is legitimate against foreign rule. No praise can be too great for Hemu's bold endeavour to re-establish indigenous rule at Delhi after more than 350 years of foreign domination.

Battle of Panipat, November 5, 1556.

The news of the fall of Delhi and Agra alarmed the Mughuls, and they advised their sovereign, then encamped at Jalandar, to retire immediately to Kabul, as their number was not more than 20,000, while Hemu's army was reputed to be 1,00,000 strong and was flushed with its recent successes. But Bairam Khan decided in favour of recovering Delhi and Akbar heartily agreed with his guardian. Leaving Khizr Khwaja Khan at Lahore to deal with Sikandar Sur, Akbar left Jalandar, on October 13, on his expedition against Hemu. At Sarhind, the three fugitive governors of Agra, Delhi and Sambhal joined Akbar, and counselled him to retreat to Kabul. Bairam Khan, however, took prompt steps to silence them by putting Tardi Beg Khan to death with Akbar's permission. Though condemned by some contemporary historians, who accused him of personal jealousy towards the deceased, the act was necessary to restore confidence in the army and to stamp out sedition. The result was wholesome. The army continued its uneventful march towards Delhi.

Hemu, who had consolidated his position and won over his Afghan officers and soldiers by a liberal distribution of wealth that he had acquired at Delhi and Agra, made preparations to check the advance of the Mughuls. He sent forward his advance-guard with a park of his artillery to encounter that of Akbar's which was proceeding rapidly under the command of Ali Quli Khan Shaibani. Ali Quli Khan was lucky enough to inflict by a successful ruse a defeat on Hemu's advance-guard and capture his artillery. Within a week or so the two main armies met on the historic field of Panipat on November 5, 1556. Bairam Khan commanded the ten thousand strong Mughul army from a long distance in the rear and placed Ali Quli Khan (later created Khan Zaman) in charge of the centre, Sikandar Khan Uzbeg in charge of the right wing and Abdulla Khan Uzbeg in charge of the left wing, while young Akbar was kept at a safe distance behind the

army. Hemu's fighting strength consisted of 30,000 Rajput and Afghan cavalry and 500 war elephants who were protected by plate armour and had musketeers and cross-bowmen mounted on their backs. He had, however, no guns. He took his position in the centre and gave charge of his right wing to Shadi Khan Kakkar and left wing to Ramyya, his own sister's son. In spite of the loss of his artillery in a preliminary engagement, Hemu boldly charged the Mughuls and overthrew their right and left wings. He then launched an attack on their centre and hurled his 500 elephants against it. The Mughuls fought valiantly, but were about to give way and Hemu seemed to be on the point of winning. The Mughul centre, however, could not be broken, for by this time most of the troopers of their defeated wings had collected themselves and moving to Hemu's flanks had launched an attack on them. Moreover, there was a deep ravine in front of it, which barred Hemu's advance. Taking advantage of it Ali Quli Khan with a part of his cavalry, made a detour and attacked Hemu's centre from behind. Hemu made brave counter-charge and fighting continued fiercely. At this time a stray arrow struck Hemu in the eye and made him unconscious. His army, presuming that its leader was dead, was seized with panic and fled in all directions. Hemu's elephant driver tried to take his unconscious master beyond the reach of danger, but was overtaken by a Mughul officer named Shah Quli Mahram, who conducted him to Akbar. Bairam Khan asked his royal ward to earn the title of *ghazi* by slaying the infidel Hemu, with his own hands. We are told by a contemporary writer, Arif Qandhari that he complied with the request and severed Hemu's head from his body. Abul Fazl's statement that he refused to kill a dying man is obviously wrong.

The second battle of Panipat produced momentous results. The Mughul victory was decisive. With the fall of Hemu his upstart military power collapsed instantly, and his wife and father fled from Delhi into Mewat. The political results of the battle were even more far-reaching. The Afghan pretensions to the sovereignty of Hindustan were gone for ever. The victors occupied Delhi on the 6th November, though some part of the immense treasure was carried away by Hemu's widow. Agra, too, was occupied without delay. An unsuccessful attempt was made to apprehend Hemu's widow. His aged father was captured and put to death on his refusal to embrace Islam. Immediate steps were taken to complete the operations against Sikandar Sur, who was compelled to surrender in May 1557. He

was granted an assignment in Bihar, from where he was, a little after, expelled by Akbar. He died a fugitive in Bangal (1558-1559). Muhammad Adil, the next Sur claimant to the throne of Delhi, was killed in 1557, at Munghir in a battle against the governor of Bangal. Ibrahim, the third Sur pretender, had to find asylum in Orissa. Thus within two years of his victory at Panipat there remained no Sur rival to contest Akbar's claim to the sovereignty of Hindustan.

Regency of Bairam Khan, 1556-1560.

The outstanding achievements of Bairam Khan as a regent were the defeat of Hemu and the elimination of Akbar's Sur rivals. The next problem awaiting solution was the setting up of a provisional administration in the territory that had passed into possession after the battle of Panipat. A rough and ready type of government for the maintenance of order and realisation of revenue was established. While operations were still continuing against Sikandar Sur, Akbar's mother and other ladies of the family arrived from Kabul and rejoined him at Mankot. At Jalandar Akbar publicly gave evidence of his regard for his guardian by permitting Bairam Khan to marry his cousin, Salima Begam (daughter of Humayun's sister, Gulrukh). On his return to Agra in October 1558, Bairam Khan made arrangements for Akbar's education, and appointed Mir Abdul Latif his tutor. He was a distinguished scholar and so liberal in his religious views that in Persia, his native country, he was considered a *Sunni*, while in India he was looked upon as a *Shia*. But even this 'paragon of greatness' failed to persuade his royal pupil to study. Akbar continued to spend his time in hunting, elephant fights and similar other pursuits. The work of administration remained in the hands of Bairam Khan, who discharged his duties satisfactorily.

Besides consolidating the newly occupied territory, Bairam sent expeditions to Gwalior and Jaunpur. Raja Ram Shah, who was attempting to recover his ancestral capital, was driven away and the fortress of Gwalior was occupied in 1557. Ali Quli Khan, now entitled *Khan Zaman*, re-occupied Sambhal and seized the country between that town and Lucknow. Ajmer in Rajasthan was also conquered. But expeditions to Ranthambhor and Chunar did not prove successful. Another expedition planned to conquer Malwa had to be recalled owing to strained relations between Bairam Khan and Akbar.

Fall of Bairam Khan, 1560.

The regency of Bairam Khan, which had been responsible for the firm re-establishment of the Mughul rule in Hindustan, lasted for four years. Early in 1560 the guardian was dismissed from office and directed by Akbar to proceed on a pilgrimage to Mecca, which was then considered as an exile from the country. The events leading to the downfall of such an indomitable personality as Bairam Khan naturally aroused great interest among contemporary writers who have left a detailed account of the episode. Though a very loyal and successful administrator and guardian, Bairam Khan had never really been popular with the members of the Mughul court. In the first place, he was a *Shia* whereas the king, his household and the nobility were *Sunnis*. Secondly, though devoted to the interest of the State "his disposition was arbitrary, haughty and jealous and he could not easily tolerate the presence of possible rivals near his young master". Thirdly, as Akbar began to attain maturity and take interest in the State affairs, Bairam Khan's influence naturally began to decline, and the Protector grew a little impatient and betrayed lack of discretion in dealing with the situation. His enemies seized every opportunity to exaggerate his faults and to misrepresent his intentions. Fourthly, Akbar, who was growing to manhood and resenting the galling tutelage, was desirous of asserting his authority. He had no privy purse and his household was not as well-provided as the family and dependants of Bairam Khan. Fifthly, the young emperor's immediate attachee, such as his foster-mother, Maham Anaga, her son Adham Khan and son-in-law Shihab-ud-din, who had ambitions of sharing the general prosperity of their patron's growing empire and wielding power, looked upon Bairam Khan as an obstacle in their way and poisoned the ears of Akbar and of his mother against him. For these reasons a coolness grew up between the Protector and his royal ward, which soon deepened into a breach. Bairam Khan's execution of Tardi Beg had given offence to several members of the court, which, being orthodox *Sunni*, felt its religious susceptibilities injured by the appointment of Shaikh Gadai, a *Shia*, to the important post of *Sadr-i-Sadur*. It so happened one day that, while Akbar was enjoying an elephant fight, one of the beasts ran through the ropes of the tents of Bairam Khan who took offence and punished the *mahaut*, although the emperor had assured him that no indignity was intended. On another day a royal elephant attacked Bairam Khan's barge, while he was boating in the Yamuna. Akbar sent the *mahaut* concerned a

captive to the Protector who inflicted a severe punishment on him. Bairam Khan dismissed Mulla Pir Muhammad, Akbar's tutor, once Bairam Khan's protege, which, too, gave offence to Akbar. Several other trivial incidents of this type occurred and widened the breach between Bairam Khan and his master, who was persuaded by the dominant party in the *harem* to dismiss the regent. A plot was now formed against him. One day, early in 1560, while Bairam Khan was at Agra and the emperor was out-a-hunting in the vicinity of that town, he received news of his mother's illness. Sending word to Bairam Khan, he proceeded to Delhi to visit his mother. Maham Anaga and other ladies gathered around him in the palace and complained bitterly against Bairam Khan whom they accused of harbouring evil designs of treason. The party won over the governors of Delhi, Lahore and Kabul to their cause, and took steps to strengthen the fortifications of the capital. When the conspirators saw that the young emperor was impressed, Maham Anaga, the head of the *harem* party, playing her trump card, begged leave to proceed to Mecca, as she pretended to be afraid of Bairam Khan's resentment. The trick prevailed and Akbar decided to dismiss Bairam Khan, and sent him a written message through his tutor, Abdul Latif, in these words: "As I was fully assured of your honesty and fidelity, I left all important affairs of State in your charge, and thought only of my own pleasures. I have determined to take the reins of government into my own hands, and it is desirable that you should now make the pilgrimage to Mecca upon which you have been so long intent. A suitable assignment out of the *parganas* of Hindustan will be made for your maintenance, the revenue of which will be transmitted to you by your agents."

In spite of his friends' advice to the contrary, Bairam Khan did not like to stain the glorious record of his life-long loyal service to the Mughul ruling family and, after some hesitation, complied with the royal command and surrendered the insignia of his office to Akbar. But, as Bairam Khan proceeded in a leisurely manner towards the Panjab to recover his private treasure, which he had left at Sarhind and Lahore, the court party sent Mulla Pir Muhammad, a former ungrateful protege of the regent, with a large army to hasten him out of the kingdom. This enraged the ex-regent, who, after leaving his family in the fort of Bhatinda, turned towards Jalandar and decided to offer armed resistance, though in a half-hearted manner.

He was, however, defeated at Tilwara on the Bias and was brought before Akbar by Munim Khan, who had just been given the Protector's title of *Khan Khana*. Akbar forgave his former guardian and offered him three alternatives: first, to receive the districts of Kalpi and Chanderi as governor; second, to accept the post of his confidential adviser at court; and third, to depart for Mecca. Bairam Khan, who was too high-minded to accept any inferior position than that he had so far held, decided to leave for Mecca. He marched, by way of Rajputana, for Patan (Anhilwara) where he was attacked by a band of Afghans and stabbed to death by one Mubarak Khan whose father had been killed at the battle of Machhiwara in 1555. His family was brought to Ahmadabad in a destitute condition. Akbar had them escorted to the court and received them honourably. He married Bairam's widow, Salima Begam, and brought up his infant son Abhur Rahim under his protection. The child rose to the highest rank and was honoured in 1584 by his father's title of *Khan Khana*. Like all masterful persons, Bairam Khan had considered himself indispensable: his fall was, sooner or later, inevitable. The court party, which was anxious to seize power and to do away with the Protector, must be held responsible for the indecent manner in which the latter's fall was brought about. Akbar, however, deserves credit for generously forgiving his actions and appreciating the services of one who was mainly responsible for the restoration of the Mughuls.

Early Reforms: Enslaving of war prisoners abolished, 1562.

Soon after entering his twentieth years Akbar showed evidence of a broad-mindedness which his predecessors had lacked and which was to make him famous as the greatest Muslim rule of India. Early in 1562 he issued orders strictly forbidding the practice of enslaving the prisoners of war. It was invariably the rule during the medieval times to make slaves of the prisoners of war and to convert them forcibly to Islam. The edict not only put an end to an inhuman practice, but also saved Hinduism from mass conversion of its adherents to an alien faith.

Death of Adham Khan and Akbar's freedom from harem party, May 16, 1562.

Desirous of freeing himself from the control of his chief nurse, Maham Anaga, Akbar had appointed his foster-father Shams-ud-din Atga Khan his chief minister, in November 1561, in place of Munim

Khan. The appointment was highly displeasing to Maham Anaga, Adham Khan, Munim Khan, Shibab-ud-din Ahmad Khan and certain other influential members of the *harem* party. Anxious to retain his position of predominance, Adham Khan entered the palace with a few of his followers on May 16, 1562, and stabbed to death Atga Khan, who was engaged in his official duties. Next, he attempted to enter the royal apartments where Akbar was sleeping at the time, to make his peace with his sovereign; but he was prevented by an eunuch who bolted the door. The noise awoke Akbar who came out of the *harem* by another door and angrily asked Adham Khan as to why he had killed the minister. Adham Khan not only put forth lame excuses, but had the audacity of seizing Akbar's hands and even his sword, as the king attempted to disarm the villain. Getting wild with rage, Akbar gave a blow with his fist into Adham's face, which stunned him. At his orders Adham was bound hand and foot and twice thrown down the palace terrace. He died instantaneously. Adham's accomplices Munim Khan, Shibab-ud-din and others absconded to escape just punishment. Akbar then informed Maham Anaga, who was lying ill, what had happened. She replied: "Your majesty has done well", and died forty days after her son's death. Akbar thus got rid of the baneful influence of the *harem* party. He erected a fine mausoleum on Adham's grave at Delhi and not only forgave Munim Khan, but also reinstated him as his chief minister.

Abolition of Pilgrims' Tax, 1563.

When Akbar reached his twentieth year he experienced in himself a remarkable spiritual change which produced a wholesome result on his attitude towards his people. "On the completion of my twentieth year," said Akbar, "I experienced an internal bitterness and from the lack of spiritual provision for my last journey my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow." By this time the young king had decided to be his own master and to map out his own policy for the benefit of his dynasty and country, without being trammelled by any other consideration. The abolition of the practice of enslaving the prisoners of war was only the first indication of the broad policy that was gradually evolving in the young emperor's mind. The next concrete evidence of that policy came to light in 1563, when orders were issued for the abolition of the pilgrims' tax throughout his kingdom. That year, while encamped at Mathura, it was brought

to his notice that his government levied a tax on the pilgrims who visited Hindu places of pilgrimage. He felt that it was contrary to the will of God that anybody should be asked to pay a tax for worshipping Him, although his form of worship might be 'erroneous'.

Abolition of Jizya, 1564.

Early next year (1564) Akbar abolished throughout his dominions the most hated tax, called 'Jizya', which all non-Muslims were required to pay. This tax had imposed a great disability on the Hindus and constantly reminded them that they were treated as an inferior people. Akbar, who had decided to remove all invidious distinctions between various sections of his subjects, caused a substantial loss to his treasury by this reform. But he won the goodwill of a vast majority of the inhabitants of the country.

Death of Khwaja Muazzam, 1564.

In March 1564 Akbar inflicted a condign punishment on his maternal uncle Khwaja Muazzam and completely freed himself from the influence of all his relatives, male or female. Muazzam was a half-crazy man and had committed a number of murders and other grave offences. He wanted to kill his wife also. On getting this information, Akbar rode to the Khwaja's country-house near Agra. Although he was late in saving the life of the lady, whom the Khwaja had already killed, he ordered the villain to be ducked into the Yamuna along with his servants; but, as he was not drowned, he was sent a prisoner to Gwalior where he died sometime after. After this incident no member of his court ever dared to influence his policy by unfair means. As Smith writes, Akbar "continued to show all proper respect to his mother, but he did not allow her to control his policy, which was conceived on principles distasteful to her."

Beginning of Imperial policy; Akbar's conquests and annexations.

During the period of two years (1560-62) following the dismissal of Bairam Khan when Akbar was not yet entirely his own master and Maham Anaga was acting as the *de facto* prime-minister, the young emperor did not take enough interest in the administration, and allowed the *harem* party to manage the affairs of the State. Yet at this very time he formed an ambitious design of conquering northern India and making himself the real emperor of the land.

The seeds of the imperial policy that characterised the later years of his reign were sown during this period. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar's policy of conquests was prompted by this desire to give peace and prosperity to the people who were suffering under the selfish and unbridled despotism of local potentates. This is hardly true so far as Akbar's early conquests were concerned. In the early years of his reign he was actuated by love of territory, power and wealth, and his decision to reduce and annex the neighbouring kingdoms was for the extension of his dominion. He did not make a secret of it. He used to say, "A monarch should be ever intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him. The army should always be exercised in warfare, lest for want of practice they become self-indulgent." It was only after Akbar had become master of most of northern India that patriotic urge and humanitarian sentiments influenced his policy. During the second half of his reign he was undoubtedly inspired by the ancient Hindu ideal of attempting to bring about the political unity of the entire country and of giving security and happiness to the people of the land.

The conquest of Malwa, 1561.

The first conquest, after Bairam's exit, was that of the province of Malwa. Its ruler, Baz Bahadur, son of Shujaat Khan, governor of the province during the reigns of Sher Shah and his son Islam Shah, was devoted to music and was fond of the company of dancers and singers. Among them the most famous was his mistress Rup Mati, who was renowned for her beauty and poetic talents. The administration of the province, allowed to take its own course, was naturally weak. Adham Khan, son of Maham Anaga, was selected, due to his mother's influence, for leading an expedition against Sarangpur, the then capital of Malwa. Baz Bahadur took no notice of the invader until the latter had reached within 20 miles of Sarangpur. The immediate threat to his life, however, aroused him from his 'dreams of love and music' and issuing out of his palace at the head of his demoralized and discontented troops, he fought a battle at a distance of three miles from Sarangpur on March 29, 1561. He was badly defeated and fled from the field. All the treasure, property and family of Baz Bahadur, including his beloved Rup Mati, fell into the hands of the victors. Adham Khan was eager to obtain possession of Rup Mati, but she took poison in order

to save her honour. Adham Khan and Pir Muhammad inflicted untold misery on the people of the province.

Appropriating most of the spoils, including women and elephants, Adham Khan sent only a fraction of what he had seized at Sarangpur. This together with the reports of the barbarities committed by him in Malwa enraged Akbar beyond measure. He left Agra on 27th April for Malwa in order to punish Adham Khan. Adham was dismayed to find the Emperor at Sarangpur on 13th May; he humbled himself before him and begged for his forgiveness. He was pardoned only when Maham Anaga had hastened to the place and interceded for her son. She concealed her son's crimes by having two beauties of Baz Bahadur's *harem* put to death, lest they should disclose the ill-treatment meted out to them and other victims by Adham Khan. Akbar then returned to Agra, leaving Adham Khan as governor of Malwa.

The journey from and back to Agra was performed in a hurried fashion and in the hottest weather. Like Alexander the Great, Akbar was indifferent to heat and cold and invariably displayed great personal courage and daring in the midst of danger. During his return journey to Agra near Narwar he killed a lioness with one blow of his sword. He took delight in mastering wild elephants and other ferocious animals.

Rebellion in Jaunpur and acquisition of Chunar, 1561.

While Malwa was being reduced to subjection by Adham Khan, there occurred a serious rebellion in the province of Jaunpur which was then the eastern part of Akbar's dominions. Sher Khan, son of the late Muhammad Adil Shah Sur, collected a large army consisting of 20,000 cavalry, 50,000 infantry and 500 elephants, and invaded Jaunpur. This caused a great consternation among the people. But Khan Zaman (Ali Quli Khan), the governor, put up a stiff resistance and was soon re-inforced by an imperial force. Although the rebel army was far superior in number, it was badly defeated and put to flight. After this victory Khan Zaman displayed an inclination to rebel. Like Adham Khan, he appropriated most of the Afghan elephants and equipage and sent only nominal spoils to Agra. Akbar thought it necessary to chastise the delinquent governor and, acting with his usual promptitude, hastened towards

Jaunpur in the heat of July. Khan Zaman and his brother, Bahadur, were terrified and met the emperor at Kara and, placing all the elephants at his disposal, begged his forgiveness. With his usual magnanimity Akbar accepted Khan Zaman's submission and sent him back as governor of Jaunpur. At the same time he dispatched Asaf Khan to wrest Chunargarh from the hands of the Afghans. In August 1561, Chunar was acquired and it became an out-post of the empire in the east.

Submission of and alliance with Jaipur, 1562.

In November 1561, Shams-ud-din Atga Khan was appointed prime-minister. At the end of the year Adham Khan, whose administration was highly tyrannical, was recalled from Malwa and Pir Muhammad was promoted to his place. In January 1562, Akbar made his first pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti of Ajmer. On the way he received Bhar Mal, ruler of Amber (Jaipur) and the first Rajput king to acknowledge his suzerainty, and accepted the hand of his daughter. The marriage took place at Sambhar at the end of January during the emperor's halt on his return journey to Agra. The princess became the mother of Jahangir and exerted great influence on Akbar and his policy. The marriage, unlike those contracted by the previous Sultans with Hindu ladies, was voluntary. It cemented the alliance between the two ruling houses of Delhi and Jaipur. Akbar took Bhagwan Das, the adopted son of Bhar Mal, and the latter's grandson, Man Singh, into his service and treated them as his relatives.

Acquisition of Merta, 1562.

At about this time Mirza Sharaf-ud-din, a prominent officer who held an assignment near Ajmer, was deputed to reduce the fortress of Merta in Marwar. It was in possession of Jaimal, the future defender of Chittor and a vassal of Udaya Singh of Mewar. The fortress surrendered after a brief siege and the garrison was promised safe conduct on the condition of the delivery of the fortress with all its ammunition and other equipage. Some of the Rajputs under Deva Das, however, offered resistance and set fire to the military stores and attacked the Mughuls. But, in spite of their gallantry, all of them, numbering 200, were over-whelmed and slain along with their leader. Merta then passed into the hands of the Mughuls.

Rebellion in Malwa, 1562.

The tyrannical conduct of Mulla Pir Muhammad, the new governor, made the Mughul rule unpopular in Malwa. The Mulla committed great atrocities on the helpless population, sparing neither age, nor rank nor even sex. Baz Bahadur, who had in 1560 fled to Khandesh, carried on depredations in the southern districts of the province, and in alliance with his protector, Mubarak II, and Tufal Khan of Berar, launched an attack on the Mulla. Pir Muhammad was obliged to proceed against the invader, but was defeated and driven back. While crossing the river Narmada his horse was up-turned by a camel and he was drowned. Baz Bahadur was thus able to recover his kingdom. His success, however, was short-lived. Akbar dispatched an army under Abdulla Khan Uzbeg who drove away Baz Bahadur into exile and re-occupied Malwa. Having suffered from misery and privation during his adventurous flight from court to court, Baz Bahadur thought it politic to submit to Akbar in the 15th year of his reign. He was enrolled as a *mansabdar* of 1,000 and was subsequently promoted to the rank of 2,000.

Conquest of Gondwana, 1564.

In 1564 Akbar directed Asaf Khan to subdue the ten-century-old Gond kingdom of Garha-Katanga, which extended from Ratanpur in the east to Raisin in the west and Rewa in the north to the frontier of the Dakhin in the south, and comprised the northern districts of the modern Madhya Pradesh. Its ruler was Rani Durgavati, a Chandel princess of Mahoba and regent of her son Vir Narayan. Though the young raja had attained majority, he allowed his mother to carry on the administration. Durgavati was a brave and wise ruler. She possessed a powerful army of 20,000 horse, 1,000 elephants and a large number of infantry, and had successfully defended her kingdom against the aggressive attacks of Baz Bahadur and the Afghans of Malwa. In pursuance of his settled policy of aggressive conquests, Akbar planned an attack on Gondwana without any provocation. The army of invasion under Asaf Khan consisted of 50,000 troops. The Rani faced them bravely with her greatly inferior force and resisted them for two days at Narhi to the east of Garha. Vir Narayan was wounded and obliged to withdraw at the request of this mother and this further weakened her small army. In spite of her brave stand the Rani, too, was wounded with

two arrows. She stabbed herself to death in order to avoid capture and dishonour. The invader now marched to Chauragarh where Vir Narayan bravely offered battle, but he was defeated and killed. His women offered *jauhar*. Asaf Khan acquired an immense booty, which included gold, silver, jewels and 1,000 elephants. He sent only 200 elephants to Akbar and retained the rest of the spoils for himself. At this time Akbar was not powerful enough to punish him for his delinquency.

Siege of Chittor, 1567-68.

In September 1567 Akbar resolved to conquer Chittor, the capital of Mewar, whose ruler, Udaya Singh, looked upon the emperor as an 'unclean foreigner' and had nothing but contempt for Bharmal, ruler of Amber, who had not only submitted but also entered into a matrimonial alliance with him. Moreover, the Rana had given shelter to Baz Bahadur, the ex-king of Malwa. Mewar lay on the route to Gujarat which could not be easily conquered and the lines of communication between Delhi and Ahmadabad could not be safe without establishing imperial control over Chittor. But the most important cause of the proposed expedition was political. Without reducing Mewar, the premier state in Rajasthan, the ruler of which was universally acknowledged as the head of the Rajputs in the country, Akbar could not establish his claim of overlordship over northern India. Udaya Singh, the reigning king of Mewar, though denounced by Tod as an unworthy son of a worthy sire, was not altogether devoid of the qualities of a soldier, and made commendable arrangements for the defence of his capital. Akbar arrived before the gigantic fort on October 23 and invested it, assigning different sectors of its wide circumference to his officers and establishing many batteries on various points. It took about one month to complete the investment. The siege lasted for a long time as each side was determined to achieve its object—Akbar to capture the fort and the Sisodias to beat him back. As the rate of casualties among the imperial troops was about 200 a day, Akbar decided to construct mines and erect *sabits* (covered ways) for the approaches. Two mines were fired on December 17 but the garrison repaired the breaches immediately and drove back the assailants, killing 200 of them. There seemed little prospect of an early termination of the siege. By chance on February 23, 1568, Akbar fired a shot at a prominent man on the rampart of the fort, who was directing defence

operations and supervising the repair of a breach in the wall. He was Jaimal, to whom the defence of the fort was entrusted by the nobles, who, aware of Akbar's grim determination, had sometime after the commencement of the siege sent away their chief, Udaya Singh, to a place of sáfety in the Aravali hills. As Jaimal was fatally wounded, the Sisodias were filled with despair, and their ladies committed *jauhar* during the night. The flames rising from the funeral pyres convinced Akbar that the victim of his shot was Jaimal. The next morning the Rajputs decided to take up the offensive. According to tradition, Jaimal, although fatally wounded, was carried on his horse as the leader of the offensive. After his fall in the battle, the command devolved on the young Sisodia noble Fateh Singh of Kailwa. Fatha, as he was popularly known, put on the yellow robes and accompanied by his wife and mother led the attack; but the brave Rajputs were over-powered by superior numbers and slain to a man.

Akbar entered the fort the next day and ordered a general massacre, as his wrath was inflamed by the stiff resistance offered to his arms. The victims numbered 30,000. This act of needless brutality is a stain on Akbar's memory. He expatiated part of his guilt by commemorating the heroism of Jaimal and Fateh Singh by erecting their statues, mounted on elephants, at the gate of his palace at Agra. On February 20 he appointed Asaf Khan governor of Mewar, most of which was in the Rana's hands, and then returned to Agra.

The fall of Chittor was followed by the gratifying news that Sulaiman Karrani, the ruler of Patna, had accepted Akbar's proposal to recognise him as emperor and caused the *khutba* to be recited and coins struck in Akbar's name.

Acquisition of Ranthambhor, 1568.

In April 1568, Akbar sent an expedition to reduce Ranthambhor, whose ruler, Raja Surajan Rai, was a Hara Rajput of Bundi and a vassal of the Rana of Mewar. But the army had to be recalled before reaching its destination owing to the invasion of Malwa by the rebellious Mirzas. In February 1569 Akbar was free to commence the siege of the fortress under his personal supervision. Mines were laid, a covered way (sabit) was constructed, and heavy cannon were

dragged up to the eminence, opposite the Ran gate, from where they kept up a "heavy fire". The siege lasted for about a month and a half and caused considerable loss of life on both sides. The fort was, however, surrendered on March 18, 1569. There are two versions of the circumstances leading to the fall of Ranthambhor. According to Tod, the resistance offered by Surjan Rai was so stout that it was felt desirable to avoid a prolonged conflict and to induce the Hara chief to surrender. Bhagwan Das of Amber, therefore, paid a visit to Surjan Rai, and he was accompanied by Akbar in the disguise of his companion. The Rajputs recognised Akbar who revealed his identity and conducted the negotiations in person. This version of the story was accepted by V.A. Smith. The other version is that of the historian Badayuni, which has found favour with Woolseley Haig. According to Badayuni, Surjan Rai rightly feeling that when an impregnable fort like Chittor could not long withstand the imperial attack, and there was no use continuing an unequal conflict, sent his sons Danda and Bhoj to wait on Akbar and beg for quarter. As Surjan Rai was a vassal of the Rana of Chittor, whose capital had already passed into the hands of Akbar, Badayuni's version seems more plausible. Akbar dictated peace to Surjan Rai, the terms of which were lenient, and returned to Agra.

Surrender of Kalinjar, 1569.

The fall of the fortresses of Chittor and Ranthambhor added immensely to the prestige of the emperor. The only other fort in northern India, impregnable in the eyes of the people, that remained out of his control was that of Kalinjar in the modern Banda district of the Uttar Pradesh. It had defied Sher Shah, and was at this time in the possession of Raja Rama Chand of Rewa. In August 1569 Majnun Khan Qaqshal was despatched against him. Rama Chand, aware of the fate of Chittor and Ranthambhor, offered little resistance and submitted. The raja was given a *jagir* near Allahabad and Kalinjar was placed under the charge of Majnun Khan.

Submission of Marwar, 1570.

In November 1570 Akbar paid a visit to Nagaur, where he received, through Bhagwan Das of Amber, the submission of the rulers of Jodhpur and Bikaner. Chandra Sen, son of Maldeva and the then ruler of Jodhpur, came and waited on the emperor. Rai Kalyan Mal of Bikaner and his son, Rai Singh, were also received in audience.

Rawal Har Rai of Jaisalmer, too, submitted. Akbar married a princess of the Bikaner ruling family and also the daughter of Har Rai of Jaisalmer. Thus by the end of 1570 the whole of Rajasthan, except Mewar with its tributary states of Dungarpur, Banswara and Pratapgarh, recognised the suzerainty of Akbar.

Conquest of Gujarat, 1572-73.

The emperor now turned his attention to Gujarat, which he desired to conquer and annex to his kingdom. The province had for some time remained in the possession of his father. It was a rich emporium of commerce between India, Turkey, Syria, Persia, Trans-Oxiana and the countries of Europe and, therefore, very wealthy. Moreover, Gujarat lay on the way to Mecca, and Akbar was naturally anxious to bring it under his control in order to provide safe journey to the Haj pilgrims. The condition of the province at this time was deplorable. Muzaffar Khan III, who was its nominal king, was powerless, and a bloody struggle for supremacy was in progress among his ambitious and selfish nobles. Akbar's rebellious relatives, the Mirzas, had taken shelter there and established themselves in several towns of this rich province. For these reasons Akbar thought it imperative to reduce Gujarat. Fortunately, a civil war was going on there and the party headed by Itimad Khan appealed to Akbar for intervention. Taking the opportunity Akbar made preparations for an expedition and sent forward 10,000 horse under Khan Kalan towards Ahmadabad, and in September 1572, himself set out to undertake the campaign. His army did not meet with great resistance and in November Akbar took possession of Ahmadabad. Muzaffar Khan III, the nominal ruler, was found hiding in a corn field and brought a prisoner. The leading nobles, including Itimad Khan, came and waited on Akbar, who appointed Khan Azam (Mirza Aziz Koka) governor of Gujarat. From Ahmadabad Akbar proceeded to Cambay, where he received the merchants of Turkey, Syria, Persia, Trans-Oxiana and Portugal. He then returned to Surat and defeated Ibrahim Mirza in the well-contested battle of Sarnal in December 1572. Next, Surat was besieged, and it fell into his hands in February 1573. After these successes he returned to Agra.

Rebellion in Gujarat, 1573.

As soon as Akbar's back was turned Muhammad Husain Mirza, who had fled to Daulatabad, returned to Gujarat. Forming an alliance

with the disaffected nobles of the province, he besieged the governor, Khan Azam, in Ahmadabad. As Khan Azam was powerless against the rebels, Akbar, accompanied by a small army, left Fatehpur Sikri on August 23, 1573, and reached Ahmadabad, on September 2, having performed the long journey of more than 450 miles in eleven days all told. The rebels, who did not believe the report of the emperor's sudden arrival, were thunder-struck to find him at the head of the army of relief from Fatehpur Sikri. Contrary to the advice of his cautious officials, Akbar immediately crossed the river Sabarmati and charged the enemy. In the hand to hand fight, in which his horse was wounded and Akbar himself dangerously exposed, he defeated the rebels and took Muhammad Husain Mirza a prisoner. Ikhtiyar-ul-Mulk, another principal rebel, who was watching the besieged Khan Azam, turned up to contest the royal army, but was slain. The rebellion was now broken. Shah Mirza, the only rebel who escaped, became a homeless wanderer. After this grand success the emperor returned to Fatehpur Sikri on October 5, 1573. The historian Smith has rightly described Akbar's second Gujarat expedition "as the quickest campaign on record". The conquest of Gujarat pushed Akbar's western frontier to the sea and brought him into contact with the Portuguese, who made peace with him. It is a pity that the emperor did not think of building a navy for the protection of his empire and for commerce with the outer world.

Conquest of Bihar and Bangal, 1574-76.

Sulaiman Karrani, who had been governor of Bihar during the last days of Sher Shah's reign and asserted his independence on the fall of the Sur dynasty, and had, early in 1568, acknowledged Akbar as his sovereign, died in 1572. He had brought the province of Bangal and Orissa under his rule and transferred his capital to Tanda. But his son, Daud, proclaimed his independence, and further incurred Akbar's displeasure by attacking Zamania (in the Ghazipur district of the Uttar Pradesh), then the eastern out-post of the Mughul empire. In 1574, Akbar undertook an expedition against the presumptuous youth and expelled him from Bihar, which province was now annexed to the empire. Daud fled from Bangal towards Orissa. Akbar left Munim Khan in charge of the Bangal campaign and returned to Fatehpur Sikri. Munim Khan defeated Daud at Tukarao near the eastern bank of the Suvarnarekha on March 3, 1575, and made Tanda his headquarters. But he did not push his advantage and allowed the fugitive

king of Bangal to regain a part of his power. In October, Daud made an attempt to recover Bangal. Accordingly, a fresh campaign was organised and Daud was finally defeated and killed in battle near Rajmahal in July 1576. Bangal was now finally annexed. But a few of the local chiefs, notably Kedar Rai of Vikrampur, Kandarp Narayan of Bekarganj, Pratapa-ditya of Jessor and Isa Khan in East Bangal, continued to give trouble for some years more.

Attempt to conquer Mewar; Battle of Haldi Ghati, June 18, 1576.

Although Chittor, the capital and with it the eastern part of Mewar, had been occupied in February 1568, a major portion of that kingdom remained under the control of Rana Udaya Singh. His indomitable warrior-son, Pratap, who was crowned king in highly depressing circumstances at Gogunda, 19 miles north-west of Udaipur, on March 3, 1572, pledged to offer uncompromising resistance to the Mughuls. Undaunted by his slender resources, defection in his ranks, and the hostility of his own brother, Shakti Singh, he resolved to fight the aggression of one who was "immeasurably the richest monarch on the face of the earth". On his part Akbar was equally determined to wrest the remaining (Western) part of Mewar from the hand of the valiant Rana. In April 1576, he sent a powerful army under Man Singh of Amber to invade the remnant of Mewar. From Mandal Garh (in Eastern Mewar) Man Singh proceeded by way of Mohi (South of Raj Samudra Lake) towards Gogunda and encamped on the plain at the northern end of Haldi Ghati, a spur of the Aravalli chain, between that town and the village of Khamnaur on the southern bank of the river Banas. Here the imperial army was attacked by Pratap, who marched from Gogunda to check the advance of the invader on June 18, 1576. Tradition has magnified the Rana's army to twenty thousand horse and that of Man Singh to eighty thousand. The fact, however, is that the Mewar force did not exceed three thousand horse and a few hundred Bhil infantry. Man Singh commanded ten thousand picked cavalry of whom nearly four thousand were Kachhwaha Rajputs, one thousand other Hindus and the remaining were mostly central Asian Turks, Uzbegs, Kazzaqs, with a thousand Sayyids of Barha and Shaikhzadas of Fatehpur Sikri. The advance-guard (about 800 horse) of the tiny Mewar force was composed of Hakim Khan Sur, Bhim Singh of Dodia, Ram Das Rathor (son of Jaimal) and a few others, the right wing (500 horse) was under

Ram Shah Tanwar of Gwalior and Bhama Shah, the left wing was under Bida Mana and the centre was commanded by the Rana himself. The Bhils of Punja and a band of other troops stood in the rear. The imperial army was preceded by a line of skirmishers under Sayyid Hashim of Barha. Its vanguard was commanded by Jagannath Kachhwaha and Ali Asaf Khan (a Kazvini Khwaja) and was strengthened by a powerful *iltmish* (advanced reserve) under Madho Singh Kachhwaha. The right wing was composed of the Sayyids of Barha, the left wing was under Mulla Qazi Khan Badakhshi (later surnamed Ghazi Khan) and Rao Loon Karan of Sambhar, and the centre was under the command of Man Singh himself. Issuing from behind the Haldighati the Rana made a frontal attack on the Mughul army which lay on the plain to the north-west of the foot-track at the northern entrance of the *ghati*. So desperate was the charge that the Mughul vanguard and left wing were scattered and its right wing and centre were hard pressed. But the Rana's army was very small in number and he had no reserve or near guard to back up his initial success. In his attempt, therefore, to break the enemy centre and right wing he hurled his war-elephants against them. But the arrows and bullets from the other side proved too much even for the death-defying Sisodia heroes. In the personal combat between the Kachhwaha and Sisodia heroes many of the latter fell victims to the Musim bullets and arrows shot indiscriminately at the Rajputs by fanatics like Badayuni. Raja Ram Shah Tanwar, who figured in front of the Rana in the thick of fighting in order to shield him from attack was slain by Jagan Nath Kachhwaha. The imperial reserve now came to join the battle and a rumour spread that Akbar had arrived in person to assist Man Singh. The Rana was now surrounded by the enemy and was about to be cut off. But Bida Jhala snatched the crown from Pratap's head, rushed to the front and cried out that he was the Rana. The enemy crowded round him and the pressure on Pratap was released. At this critical time some faithful soldiers seized the reins of the Rana's horse and took him safely to the rear of the line. Bida fell fighting loyally to save his master. At this the Rana's men lost heart and turned away from the field, leaving a large number of their dead behind. The battle of Haldighati was over. The loss on both the sides was very heavy, the Rana losing nearly half of the entire force. The imperial troops were so much exhausted that they could not think of pursuing the Rana and passed the dreadful night in apprehension of a surprise attack. In fact, they could not gauge the magnitude of their success

until next morning. The Rana evacuated Gogunda, and Man Singh then made arrangements for its occupation.

Notwithstanding his best efforts, Man Singh did not succeed in reducing that fraction of Mewar (north-western region including Kumbhalgarh and Deosuri) which still remained in the hands of the Rana. He could not hold Gogunda for long owing to want of provisions and the hostility of the people. Neither his threats nor persuasion would bring Pratap round. The indomitable Sisodia king, though reduced to starvation on more than one occasion, did not condescend to lower his pride and acknowledge Akbar's suzerainty, much less to agree to a matrimonial alliance with him. Man Singh fell in disfavour with Akbar for his failure and was recalled to court. It is erroneously supposed that Akbar, moved by sentiments of chivalrous regard for his great adversary, left him unmolested for the rest of his life. The truth, however, is that Akbar did not relax his attempt to reduce the Rana. But all his attempts failed; and Pratap succeeded in recovering possession of the greater part of his ancestral territory. The Rana's death on January 19, 1597, however, provided Akbar an opportunity to reduce Mewar to submission. But, as the emperor was then engaged in other quarters, he could not seize the opportunity. Although he sent more than one expedition against Amar Singh, son and successor of Pratap, Mewar could not be conquered and annexed.

Reduction of Kabul, 1581.

In 1580 many prominent Muslim officials in Bihar and Bangal, who were opposed to Akbar's policy of absolute religious toleration and were hard hit by his administrative, financial and military reforms, rose in revolt and formed a conspiracy to depose him and give the throne to his half-brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim of Kabul. Accustomed to a preferential religious treatment, they could not brook Akbar's policy of placing the diverse faiths in the land on a footing of equality with Islam and fancied that their religion was in danger. Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, the *qazi* of Jaunpur, promulgated an authoritative decree (*fatwa*) that rebellion against Akbar was a religious duty. The Qaqshal Turks, who held prominent posts in Bangal, followed the example of their co-religionists in Bihar who were the first to rebel and read the *khutba* in Mirza Hakim's name. They besieged the governor, Muzaffar Khan, in Tanda and

defeated an imperial army which was sent to reinforce Muzaffar Khan. The rebellion now spread over the whole of the two provinces. Akbar, rightly realising that the source of the real danger was his own brother, made suitable military preparations to proceed and attack Kabul, sending at the same time adequate troops to Bihar and Bangal to put down the rebels and to prevent them from proceeding to join Mirza Hakim. He took prompt action against the traitors at his court, who were in treasonable correspondence with his step-brother. He imprisoned some and put others, including their leader Shah Mansur, to death in order to strike terror into the hearts of the disaffected. Hakim, who had crossed the Indus and advanced to Lahore, was disappointed to find that contrary to the information conveyed to him, the Muslims of the Punjab did not even move their little finger to assist him. Before Akbar had reached Macchiwara on March 8, 1581, Mirza Hakim was on his hurried retreat towards Kabul. Akbar quickly reached the Indus and sent a force under Man Singh to occupy Kabul, himself following the Raja without loss of time. Hakim fled from Kabul to Ghurband and Akbar entered Kabul on August 10. The terrified Hakim sent messages of submission and was pardoned. But Akbar appointed his step-sister (and Mirza's real sister) Bakht-un-Nisa Begam governor of Kabul and returned to Fatehpur Sikri. After his departure Hakim took the *de facto* charge of the administration, but his sister continued to be the official governor. Mirza Hakim died in July 1585, and Kabul was then incorporated as a province of the empire.

The year 1581 has been described as the most critical year of Akbar's life since his assumption of authority in 1560. The emperor's resourcefulness, tact and ability enabled him to get the better of his enemies and to emerge from the struggle more powerful than before.

Annexation of Kashmir, 1585.

Akbar had for long cherished the ambition of reducing Kashmir to submission by diplomacy and failing that by force of arms. Though Yusuf Khan, the Sultan of Kashmir, sent his third son in 1581 and the elder one in 1585 to wait on Akbar, he had evaded appearing in person. With the object of over-awing him into submission and also making arrangements for the incorporation of Kabul as a province of the empire, Akbar left Fatehpur Sikri for Lahore in the autumn of 1585. He reached Rawalpindi early in December and thence moved to Attock.

He dispatched Zain Khan Kokaltash and Raja Birbal and Hakim Abul Fateh to chastise the Yusufzai and Mandar tribes of the frontier region, as they had become troublesome. But the imperial troops did not farewell in the battle that followed and Raja Birbal was killed. Akbar was much grieved and he censured Zain Khan and Abul Fateh for their defeat and failure to recover Raja Birbal's body. Raja Todar Mal, who was now sent to avenge the defeat, reduced the tribesmen to submission. Man Singh, who was commissioned to join him defeated the Afghans in a battle in the Kyhbar Pass. The tribesmen, though not thoroughly subdued, gave no further trouble to the Government.

Simultaneously with the expedition against the tribesmen, Akbar made arrangements for the reduction of Kashmir and entrusted the work to Qasim Khan, Raja Bhagwan Das and some other commanders. The imperial army proceeded towards Srinagar early in 1586, but was disheartened owing to rain and snow and agreed to make peace with Sultan Yusuf Khan, who, feeling himself weak, met the imperial generals and sought for terms. Yusuf Khan recognised Akbar as his sovereign and agreed to the recitation of the *khutba* and the issuing of coins in the emperor's name. He also consented to the appointment of imperial officers to take charge of the mint, saffron cultivation, manufacture of shawls and regulation of game in Kashmir. Akbar disapproved of the treaty, and, when Sultan Yusuf Khan and his son Yaqub Khan came to wait on him, he ordered the Sultan to be arrested; but Yaqub Khan escaped to Srinagar and made preparations for resistance. Akbar thereupon sent an army against him which compelled him to surrender. Kashmir was now annexed to the empire and became a *sarkar* of the province of Kabul. Yusuf Khan was released after some time and appointed a mansabdar of 500.

Conquest of Sindh, 1591.

Akbar had acquired the island fortress of Bhakkar as early as 1574. He now coveted the southern part of Sindh at the mouth of the Indus without which his supremacy over north-western India could not be considered as complete. Moreover, he wanted to use it as a base of operations against Kandhar, then in the possession of Shah Abbas of Persia. In 1590 the emperor appointed Abdur Rahman, now ennobled with his father's title of *Khan Khana*, governor of Multan, with instructions to conquer the principality of Thatta (lower Sindh) from

its Turkoman ruler, Mirza Jani Beg. The latter fought two battles in defence of his country, but was defeated and compelled to surrender his entire territory, including the fortresses of Thatta and Sehwan (1591). He entered the imperial service and was enrolled as *mansabdar* of 3,000 and a member of *Din Ilahi*.

Conquest of Orissa, 1592.

In 1590, Raja Man Singh, governor of Bihar, invaded Orissa and prepared to attack Qutulu Khan Lohani, who had set himself up as the ruler of that distant province. Qutulu Khan died before he could met Man Singh in battle. His son, Nisar Khan, after a feeble resistance, submitted and was confirmed as governor. But two years later he repudiated the treaty and seized the crown-lands of Puri and Jagannath. Raja Man Singh defeated and expelled the rebel. The province was now annexed to the empire and became a part of the *suba* of Bangal.

Conquest of Baluchistan, 1595.

In February 1595, Mir Masum was deputed to conquer Baluchistan, which was the only principality in northern India that had not yet acknowledged Akbar's authority. The gifted general attacked the fortress of Sibi, north-east of Quetta, and compelled the Pani Afghans, who were defeated, to deliver the whole of Baluchistan, including Makran, the region near the coast, into the hands of the imperialists.

Acquisition of Kandhar, 1595.

In April 1595, the Persian governor of Kandhar, Muzaffar Husain Mirza, who was not on good terms with the authorities at Tehran, peacefully delivered the powerful fortress into the hands of Shah Beg, an officer whom Akbar had deputed for the purpose. Muzaffar Hussain Mirza was received with honour and appointed a mansabdar of 5,000 horse and given the *jagir* at Sambhal. The acquisition of Kandhar completed Akbar's conquests in northern India, the whole of which, except a small fraction of Mewar, was now in his possession.

Conquest of Khandesh and a part of Ahmadnagar, 1593-1601; Akbar's Dakhin Policy.

Even before he brought the whole of northern India in his possession and gave it political and administrative unity, Akbar had

cherished the ambition of conquering all the four existing Sultanates of the Dakhin into which the old Bahmani kingdom had split. In August 1591 he despatched four diplomatic missions severally to Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda, calling upon their rulers to recognise his suzerainty and pay him tribute. Raja Ali Khan, the ruler of Khandesh, whose territory lay immediately south of Akbar's empire, offered to acknowledge the emperor's authority; but those of the other three States politely rejected the offer. Accordingly in 1593, Akbar commissioned Abdur Rahim *Khan Khana* to reduce Ahmadnagar by force. Accompanied by the emperor's second son, Murad, who was associated with him in the command, the Khan Khana besieged Ahmadnagar, which was heroically defended by the gallant Chand Bibi, Queen-Dowager of Bijapur and an aunt of the reigning king Muzaffar of Ahmadnagar. Torn by dissensions, the imperial generals raised the siege and made peace in 1596, recognising the grandson of Burhanul-Mulk, named Bahadur, then a child, as Sultan of Ahmadnagar, under the suzerainty of Akbar. The new Sultan ceded Berar to the empire and sent valuable presents to Agra.

The peace lasted for a short duration only. Very soon the Ahmadnagar government broke the terms of the treaty and attempted to recover Berar. In 1597, the *Khan Khana* was obliged to renew operations. The imperialists gained an indecisive victory. The Mughul cause suffered severely on account of dissensions between Murad and the *Khan Khana*. Akbar, therefore, decided to recall both of them and to appoint Abul Fazl in their place. He prepared to march in person to the Dakhin. Daulatabad fell before his arrival, in 1599. Then Ahmadnagar was besieged and captured in August 1600. The young king Bahadur Nizam Shah was taken prisoner and sent to Gwalior; but the nobles of Ahmadnagar set up another puppet and continued to resist the Mughul arms.

Before the fall of Ahmadnagar, the king of Khandesh, Miran Bahadur Shah, whose father, Raja Ali Khan, had died fighting on the side of his Mughul suzerain in a battle with Ahmadnagar, had repudiated the Mughul authority and prepared to defend himself in his strong fortress of Asirgarh. Akbar resolved to attack him. Early in 1599, he entered Khandesh, took possession of its capital, Burhanpur, and besieged the impregnable fortress of Asirgarh, which was well

provided with artillery, war-like stores and provisions. The siege continued for a long time and Abul Fazl was sent to supervise the operations and infuse vigour into the besiegers. The imperialists carried an important outwork which frightened Miran Bahadur and he submitted to Akbar on December 21, 1600. The garrison continued to resist for a few days more, but surrendered the fortress on January 6, 1601. Khandesh was now annexed to the empire. Miran Bahadur was sent a prisoner to Gwalior and was granted a subsistance allowance of 4,000 *ashrafis* a year. Vincent Smith has charged Akbar with gross perfidy in his dealings with Miran Bahadur; but, as Woolseley Haig has rightly pointed out, Miran Bahadur was as much to blame as Akbar, for 'each strove to outwit the other'. Akbar's main guilt in connection with the siege of Asirgarh was his order to put Muqarrab, son of the commandant of the fort, to death without a reason.

This was Akbar's last conquest.

Consolidation of the conquests.

Akbar invariably followed the policy of giving an organised administration to his conquests. As soon as a principality or a province was reduced to submission, he took steps to establish therein complete order and peace, and to appoint civil officers to carry out a revenue settlement, which was based on the principles of measurement and classification of the land. Religious toleration was extended to the newly conquered areas. Social, religious, as well as administrative reforms were introduced and the interest of the people, social, moral and material, was consulted. As will be shown hereafter, Akbar, unlike his predecessors, including Sher Shah, gave a uniform system of administration to all the provinces of his empire and paved the way for the establishment of a common nationality in the land.

REBELLIONS

Revolt of Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, 1564.

Most of the Mughul officials, who had long been in service from the time of Humayun, felt dissatisfied with Akbar's policy of centralisation. They wanted not only autonomy in their respective jurisdictions, but also semi-independent status with right and power to do as they liked. Adham Khan, Pir Muhammad and Khan

Zaman had behaved, as if they were kings in their provinces. Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, governor of Malwa, followed in their footsteps and prepared to rise in rebellion. In July 1564 Akbar proceeded to punish him. For a fortnight he was detained on the way by heavy rain on the bank of the Chambal. On his approach, Abdullah fled from Mandu, but Akbar pursued and defeated him. Abdullah's women and elephants fell into his hands. Qara Bahadur Khan was appointed governor of Malwa. After establishing friendly relations with Mubarak Shah II of Khandesh, whose daughter he married, and successfully persuading the ruler of Gujarat to banish the rebel, Abdullah, from his territory, Akbar returned to Agra in October.

The Uzbeg Rebellion, 1564-67.

Among the old nobility of Akbar's court, the Uzbegs formed a most influential and turbulent section. Their leaders were Khan Zaman (Ali Quli Khan), governor of Jaunpur, his brother Bahadur, their uncle Ibrahim Khan, Khan Alam (Iskandar Khan), governor of Awadh, and Abdullah Khan, who was recently driven out of Malwa. They held important assignments and commanded powerful bodies of troops. Khan Zaman and Khan Alam had ably assisted Bairam Khan and rendered valuable service in re-establishing the Mughul rule in northern India. Feeling that their services had not been adequately rewarded, they nursed a grievance against their young sovereign. Moreover, they disliked Akbar's policy of centralization and his 'Persianised ways' and were filled with a desire to retain their semi-independent status and freedom to act as they liked. Their descent from a common stock and family connections, besides the common fancied grievance at the hands of the king, had made them resolve to sink or swim together. They rose in revolt and planned a campaign against Akbar. It was decided that Ibrahim and Khan Alam should attack Kanauj, while, at the same time, Khan Zaman and Bahadur should capture Manikpur. Khan Zaman and his brother defeated the royal troops and obtained possession of Manikpur. Khan Alam and Ibrahim defeated another royal army in May 1565. The situation was so menacing that Akbar was obliged to take the field in person. He made a surprise attack on Khan Alam near Lucknow and put him to flight. Khan Alam joined Khan Zaman, who was besieging Manikpur. But on hearing that Akbar had occupied Lucknow, they abandoned the siege and fled into the marshy land of Bahraich and from there withdrew to Hajipur in

Bihar. The rebellion lasted for more than two years during the course of which Akbar thought it prudent to forgive the rebels more than once. But as they were not prepared to abandon their pretensions to a feudal aristocracy, he had to take the field again and crush the Uzbegs finally. In January Khan Zaman was killed and the Uzbeg rebellion came to an end. Akbar was now free to centralise power in his own hands and reduce the old nobility to the status of mere officials whom he could appoint and dismiss at will.

Mirza Hakim's invasion of India, 1566-67.

Encouraged by the Uzbeg rebellion, the leaders of which were in communication with him, Mirza Muhammad Hakim, Akbar's step-brother and governor of Kabul, invaded the Panjab in the hope that he would be supported by the assignees in that province. He proceeded by way of Bhera to Lahore where he was opposed by Khan Kalan. On receipt of the news, Akbar set out from Agra on November 16, 1566, and, as he reached Delhi, Muhammad Hakim beat a hasty retreat. Akbar, however, continued his march and reached Lahore at the end of January 1567. A contingent of troops was sent to pursue the fugitive; it returned after Hakim had crossed back to the other side of the Indus.

Rebellion of the Mirzas.

While at Lahore, Akbar received reports of a rebellion of the Mirzas in the Sambhal and Azampur districts. The rebels, Ibrahim Husain Mirza, Muhammad Husain Mirza, Masud Husain Mirza and Aqil Husain Mirza and their two nephews, Sikandar Mirza and Mahmud Mirza (Shah Mirza), who joined them, were descendents of Timur's second son and were blood relations of Akbar. Probably their rebellion was due to their belief that, being connected by blood with the ruling family, they deserved a more handsome provision for their maintenance. Following the example of Muhammad Zaman Mirza and Muhammad Sultan Mirza of the time of Humayun, they obtained forcible possession of the crown-lands in their neighbourhood. Munim Khan defeated and drove them into Malwa. But as they indulged in guerilla tactics and fled from place to place, they could not be completely reduced till 1573. The time coincided with the Uzbeg rebellion and the latter's invitation to Mirza Hakim to make another attempt against Akbar. But, as we have already seen, the Uzbegs suffered defeat and their leader, Khan Zaman, was killed in

battle and his brother, Bahadur Khan, was executed. The rebellion of the Mirzas also came to an end almost simultaneously with the end of the Uzbeg menace. The Mirzas were hunted down and expelled from Malwa whence they fled to Gujarat. They were finally beaten and exterminated when Akbar undertook his second expedition to that province in 1573. The last important rebellion of his nobles who had been closely connected with his family since the time of his father occurred in 1580, and was so widespread as to constitute a grave threat to Akbar's life and throne. But it was successfully crushed, as we have seen, in 1581 after which year the emperor had no opposition to face from the old peers.

Policy towards the Rajputs.

Akbar's treatment of the Rajputs was not the outcome of thoughtless sentiment or a mere chivalrous regard for their valour, generosity and patriotism. It was the result of a deliberate policy and was based on the principles of enlightened self-interest, recognition of merit, justice and fair play. Akbar had realised at an early age that his Muslim officials and followers, foreign mercenaries as they were, acted principally for their own ends and could not be absolutely depended upon. Almost from the day of his accession he had to face rebels in his own camp and court. From Shah Abdul Mali, who displayed contumacy and refused to attend Akbar's coronation durbar (16th February, 1556) to Shah Mansur, who, though raised to the exalted office of prime-minister, traitorously backed up Mirza Muhammad Hakim (1580), we have a long list of Muslim rebels against the authority of one to whom they owed their position and importance in the world. Even Bairam Khan rose against his sovereign (1560), though in a half-hearted fashion, and stained the record of his life-long loyal services. Next, Maham Anaga proved to be highly unprincipled and selfish. Her son, Adham Khan, disregarded Akbar's authority (1561) and misappropriated most of the booty in Malwa, and, a little later, killed the prime-minister, Atga Khan, and, on being reprimanded, had the audacity to catch hold of Akbar's arms (1562). The rebellions of Asaf Khan I and Abdullah Khan Uzbeg, in 1564, were followed by that of Khan Zaman, one of the highest nobles in the empire, who with his Uzbeg kinsmen menaced (1565-67) Akbar's throne and life. Then occurred the rising of the Mirzas, Akbar's relatives, which lasted till after 1573, and recalled to memory the troubles which Humayun had to face at

the hands of his unworthy brothers and relations (Mirzas). The rebellions of those very people on whom depended the Mughul authority in a foreign land and over an alien people, and occurring, as they did, so frequently, convinced Akbar, while he was yet a boy, that the only way to perpetuate his power and dynasty was to seek the support of the important political elements in the population of the country. Moreover, the Afghan opposition to the Mughuls, whom the former considered as usurpers of their birth-right, had not died out. The men of this race still dominated Bihar, Bangal and Orissa, to say nothing of their homeland in the frontier region and Kabul. Sher Khan, son of the late Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah was preparing to overthrow the Mughul power in the eastern parts of the modern Uttar Pradesh (1561), and Sulaiman Karrani was fast becoming the leader of the Afghans in India. Akbar was shrewd enough to realise what his father and grandfather had failed to see that the Rajputs, who held large areas in their possession and were masters of legions and renowned for their valour and fidelity to their word, could safely be depended upon and converted into friends. Hence he decided to seek their co-operation and use them as a counterpoise against his self-seeking Mughul, Uzbeg, Persian and Afghan nobles and officials. In pursuance of this policy, he accepted the submission of Raja Bhar Mal of Amber (Jaipur) and welcomed a matrimonial alliance with that Kachhwaha ruling family in January 1562. He took Bhagwan Das and Man Singh into his service, and soon discovered that they were more loyal and serviceable than most of his top-ranking Muslim followers. It was, in fact, only after he had tested the Kachhwaha loyalty and devotion that he decided to invite other Rajput chiefs in the land to accept him as their suzerain and join his service on a footing of equality with the highest of his Muslim officials and commanders. He shrewdly guessed that, if left in the possession of their autonomous States and treated honourably, they would accept the offer. He was right. One after another, all the States of Rajasthan entered into alliance with him and were enrolled as *mansabdars*. But this result was not achieved without military demonstration and even fight. Merta fell in 1562; Ranthambhor in 1568. In 1570 Marwar, Bikaner and Jaisalmer submitted without resistance. Other States in Rajasthan and Central India followed suit. Mewar alone disdainfully rejected the proposal and, in spite of a prolonged siege, during which its capital, Chittor, was lost, and almost continued warfare thereafter, it remained aloof even

though the collateral branches of its ruling family which held the independent states of Dungarpur, Banswara and Pratapgarh, had submitted to Akbar in 1577. Akbar was generous enough to forget the resistance and even grim fighting offered by some of the Rajputs, and admit them to the same privilege and honour in his service as he had shown to those who had submitted without fighting. Being peculiarly free from religious fanaticism, he, unlike the Sultans of Delhi, did not brand the Rajputs as infidels or political inferiors. Nor did he during the course of his campaigns in their lands, indulge in the sacriligeous policy of temple destroying and image breaking, of which his predecessors had been guilty. In fact, he looked upon the highest among them, who had entered into matrimonial alliances, as his relatives. The result was that the Rajputs, who had not only held aloof but fought stubbornly and consistently against the Turko-Afghan Sultans of Delhi for more than 350 years, became staunch supporters of the Mughul throne and a most effective instrument for the spread of Mughul rule in the country. They contributed freely and richly to the military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural and artistic achievements of Akbar's reign. Their co-operation not only gave security and permanence to the Mughul rule, but also brought about an unprecedented economic prosperity and cultural renaissance in the country, and a synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim cultures, which is a priceless legacy of the Mughul rule.

Evolution of Akbar's religious policy.

Akbar was born and brought up in comparatively liberal surroundings. His father was a Mughul *Sunni*, his mother a Persian *Shia*, and he first saw the light and lived for about a month, in the house of a Hindu chief. Though orthodox in his religious views, Humayun had to conform outwardly with the principles of *Shiaism*, and his most loyal officer and commander Bairam Khan, was a confirmed *Shia*. Bairam Khan who subsequently became Akbar's guardian and protector, was responsible for moulding his conduct and shaping his policy. Akbar's most notable tutor, Abul Latif, who was so liberal in his religious views as to be dubbed a *Sunni* in the *Shia* country of Persia and a *Shia* in the *Sunni* ridden northern India, taught him the principle of *Suleh-i-kul* (universal peace) which Akbar never forgot. Thus heredity and environment combined to influence Akbar's religious views in the direction of liberalism. By nature he was incapable of religious fanaticism and though, after Bairam Khan's fall, he had,

sometimes during the next few years, been persuaded to sanction measures of persecution against a few notable Muslim 'heretics', he never really gave evidence of narrow religious bigotry. Even before he was twenty, he abolished the pernicious practice of ensalving the prisoners of war and converting them to Islam. Profoundly religious in the correct sense of the term, he often pondered over the problems of life and death, and on completing his twentieth year he was seized with remorse caused by the difficulty of reconciling religion and politics. "On the completion of my twentieth year," said Akbar, "I experienced an internal bitterness and from the lack of spiritual provision for my last journey, my soul was seized with exceeding sorrow." This spiritual awakening became responsible for the abolition of a tax, in 1563, on Hindu pilgrims visiting their holy shrines, in all the parts of his empire. Next year a more revolutionary measure was enacted. It was the abolition of the hated *jizya* or poll-tax on non-Muslims, which all previous Turko-Afghan Sultans and even his father and grandfather had thought it a religious duty to realize. Although this measure marked a fundamental departure in his religious policy, Akbar, nevertheless, in his personal life, continued for many years to be a good, though tolerant, Muslim. We have it on the testimony of the contemporary historian Badayuni that not only did Akbar say his daily five prayers and go through other observances of his religion, but in gratefulness to the Almighty for bestowing on him territory, wealth and power, he spent early hours of dawn every day in meditating on Him and uttering *Ya Hu! Ya Hadi!* etc. in orthodox Muslim fashion. He sought the company of Muslim religious men and every year devoutly performed the pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chishti at Ajmer. Possessed of an inquisitive bent of mind, he desired to understand the principles of his religion. With this object in view, early in 1575, he erected a building at Fatehpur Sikri, entitled *Ibadat Khana* (House of Worship), in which regular religious discussions were held on Thursday evenings. In the beginning, the debates were confined to the Muslims: Shaikhs, Sayyids, the Ulema and the Muslim nobles alone were invited to attend the meetings. The orthodox *Sunni* party, headed by Mulla Abdullah of Sultanpur, entitled Makhdum-ul-Mulk, and Shaikh Abdun Nabi, the chief *Sadr*, took a prominent part in the discussions. But as it was divided against itself, it soon lost its influence with Akbar. Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Abdun Nabi quarrelled among themselves on fundamental questions of Islamic theology and openly exhibited unworthy intolerance to each other's views. Some of the

learned scholars called their opponents names and all imputed motives to one another. "All at once one night," writes Badayuni, "the veins of the neck of the *Ulema* of the age swelled up and a horrid noise and confusion ensued. His Majesty got very angry at their rude behaviour." Such occurrences in the House were by no means uncommon. On hearing that Haji Ibrahim had issued a *fatwa* legalising the use of yellow and red dress, " Mir Adil, Sayyid Muhammad, in the imperial presence called him an accursed wretch, abused him and lifted his stick to strike him. . . ." Their irresponsible behaviour and quarrells, their inability to explain satisfactorily the fundamental doctrines of Islam and their personal greed and unworthy condust convinced Akbar that truth must be sought outside their bickerings.

Now began the second stage in the evolution of Akbar's religious ideas. His belief in orthodox Islam was shaken. He threw open the debates to members of other faiths, such as Hindus, Jains, Zoroastrians and Christians. On June 22, 1579, he mounted the pulpit at the principal mosque at Fatehpur Sikri, and read the *khutba*, in verse composed by the Poet Laureate, Faizi. In September Shaikh Mubarak, the father of Faizi and Abul Fazl, produced at the emperor's instance a formal document (*Mahzar*) giving Akbar the supreme authority of an arbiter in all controversial causes concerning Islam in the country whether they were ecclesiastical or civil. This document was signed by all important Muslim divines, including Makhdum-ul-Mulk and Abdun Nabi. The following is the text of the document:

" Whereas Hindustan is now become the centre of security and peace, and the land of justice and benevolence, so that numbers of the higher and lower orders of the people, and especially learned men possessed of divine knowledge, and subtle jurists who are guides to salvation and travellers in the path of the diffusion of learning have immigrated to this land from Arabia and Persia, and have domiciled themselves here; now we, the principal '*Ulema*', who are not only well versed in the several departments of the law and the principles of jurisprudence, and well acquainted with the edicts based on reason and testimony, but are also known for our piety and honest intensions, have duly considered the deep meaning, first, of the verse of the *Quran*, "Obey God and obey the Prophet, and those who are invested with authority among you"; and, secondly, of the genuine Tradition, "Surely the man who is dearest to God on the Day of Judgment is the just leader;

whosoever obeys the *Amir* obeys Me, and whosoever rebels against him rebels against Me" ; and, thirdly, of several other proofs based on reason and testimony; and we have agreed that the rank of Just King is higher in the eyes of God than that of *Mujtahid.*

"Further, we declare that the King of Islam, the Asylum of Mankind, the Commander of the Faithful, Shadow of God in the world, Abul-Fath Jalal-ud-din Muhammad Akbar, *Padishah-i-Ghazi* (whose kingdom God perpetuate) is a most just and wise king with a knowledge of God.

"Should, therefore, in future, religious questions arise regarding which the opinions of the *Mujtahids* are at variance, and His Majesty, in his penetrating understanding and clear wisdom, be inclined to adopt, for the benefit of the nation and in the interests of good order, any of the conflicting opinions which exist on that point, and should he issue a decree to that effect, we do hereby agree that such a decree shall be binding on all his people.

"Should His Majesty see fit to issue a new order in conformity with some text of the *Quran*, and calculated to benefit the nation, all shall be bound by it, and opposition to it will involve damnation in the next world, and loss of religious privileges and property in this.

"This document has been written with honest intentions and for the glory of God and the propagation of Islam, and has been signed by us, the principal *Ulema* of the Faith and leading Theologians in the month of Rajab, A.H. 987 (August-September 1579)."

The above document, which has been miscalled Infallibility Decree, gave Akbar the authority to adopt any one of the conflicting opinions of the Muslim jurists, and also that of adopting any line of conduct and policy in non-controversial matters, provided it was in consonance with a verse of the *Quran*. He thus appropriated for himself what had hitherto been the special privilege of the *Ulema*, and more particularly of the Chief *Sadr*. Henceforth he became armed with religious authority over his Muslim subjects. It will not be fair to say that Akbar became pope as well as king, as modern writers like Smith and Woolseley Haig have wrongly affirmed.

Although religious discussions in the *Ibadat Khana* continued, Akbar now arranged for private meetings with scholars and holy

men of various faiths. After his loss of faith in Sunni orthodoxy he turned to *Shia* scholars. Hakim Abul Fateh, a man of exceedingly winning address from Gilan, acquired a great ascendancy in Akbar's estimation. Mulla Muhammad Yazdi, another *Shia* divine, became his intimate associate and tried to make the emperor a *Shia*. But Akbar found no consolation in the *Shia* faith and turned to *Sufism*. Shaikh Faizi and Mirza Sulaiman of Badakhshan, reputed to be "*Sahib-i-Hal*" initiated him into the mysteries of *Sufi* principles and practices, like direct communion with God. But though Akbar was a mystic by nature and beheld 'visions' more than once, he found *Sufism* too inadequate for his purpose. So he attempted to seek consolation in other religions, freely mixing with Hindu *sanyasis*, Christian missionaries and Zoroastrian priests. So intense was his curiosity to know the truth that he denied himself rest even at bed-time and held discussions with the Brahmin scholars, Purushottam and Devi, and reputed theologians of other faiths in the balcony of his bed-room during the night. But each of these faiths, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism and Christianity, failed to appeal exclusively to his expanding soul.

A true rationalist, Akbar, carried on his investigation into the truth in a scientific spirit. "Day and night," writes Badayuni, "people did nothing but enquire into and investigate the profound secrets of science, the subtlities of revelation, the curiosities of history and the wonders of Nature......His Majesty has passed through the various phases and through all sorts of religious practices and sectarian beliefs, and has collected everything which people can find in books, *with a talent for selection and a spirit of enquiry opposed to every (Islamic) principle*." The result of his life-long enquiry was the conviction that "there were sensible men in all religions and abstemious thinkers.... If some true knowledge was thus everywhere to be found, why should truth be confined to one religion or creed like Islam which was comparatively new and scarcely a thousand years old."*

Akbar's rationalism had long before this time shaken his belief in orthodox Islam. He rejected the Islamic doctrines of Resurrection and Judgment, and brushed aside revelation. He would not believe how anyone could go to Heaven, have a long conversation with God and come back to find his bed still warm. He adopted many

*Ain, Vol. I, p. 179.

Hindu and Parsee beliefs and customs, such as belief in the doctrines of Transmigration of Soul and Sun worship. Thus began his apostacy from Islam. Many a modern historian holds the view that Akbar lived and died a Muslim. The present writer, however, finds himself unable to agree with them. Islam, unlike Hinduism, is a definite creed and one who does not believe in the five fundamentals of that religion, namely, faith in Kalima (unity of God and prophetship of Mohammad), five daily prayers, fast of Ramzan, Zakat, and Haj, ceases to be a muslim. The belief in the doctrine of Karma, the theory of transmigration of soul and in the worship of the Sun, though conceived only as a source of light, and the conviction that every religion is based on truth, are opposed to the fundamental Islamic axiom that the Muslim religion alone had the monopoly of truth and all that was said and prescribed by former prophets has been cancelled by the latest and greatest of them, namely Muhammad. He looked upon Muhammad as a prophet, not the Prophet. Moreover, we have no contemporary recorded evidence to show that Akbar continued to have faith in the religion of his birth. Botelho and Peruschi who held that view were neither contemporary writers nor even secondary authorities and based their conclusions only on Jesuit writings. Akbar's letter to Abdullah Khan Uzbeg written in 1586 wherein he described himself a Muslim need not be taken seriously. It was sheer diplomatic correspondence and not an honest statement of fact. It was, of course, difficult to repudiate completely all elements of Muslim culture in which he had his birth and early training. Most of these he retained till the end.

Din Ilahi.

Dissatisfied with tradition and authority, Akbar prescribed human reason as the sole basis of religion and extended complete religious toleration to every creed in the empire. He was grieved to see narrow-minded religious zealots preaching hatred against one another. In his anxiety to do away with religious discord in the empire he made an attempt to bring about a synthesis of all the various religions known to him, and styled it *Tawhid-i-Ilahi* or Divine Monotheism. It was a socio-religious order or brotherhood, designed to cement diverse communities in the land. It was based on the principle of universal toleration (Sulah-i-kul) and comprised good points of all the religions investigated by the emperor himself. It believed in the unity of God and some of the important Hindu, Jain and Parsee doctrines found a prominent place in it.

According to Badayuni and the Jesuit writer Bartoli, Akbar after his return from the Kabul campaign, convened in 1582 a counsel of his principal courtiers and officers and formally promulgated the Din Ilahi. He referred to the discord among the diverse creeds and emphasised the necessity of bringing them all into one " in such fashion that they should be both 'one' and 'all'; with the great advantage of not losing what is good in any one religion, while gaining whatever is better in another". All the courtiers except Raja Bhagwan Das agreed. Some of the courtiers enrolled themselves as members of the organization. The order had a ceremonial of its own. When a person desired to be a member, he was introduced by Abul Fazl, who acted as its high priest. Then the man with his turban in hand put his head at the feet of the emperor. The emperor raised him up, placed the turban back on his head and gave him the *shast* (his own likeness) upon which were engraved God's name and the phrase *Allahu Akbar*. The order had its own salutations, which were *Allahu Akbar* and *Jall-e-Jalal-e-Hu*. The members had to give a dinner in their life-time as against the old practice of holding a banquet in honour of a dead person. They were required to give a party on the anniversary of their birth and to practise charity. They had to abstain from eating meat as far as possible, and from using the vessels of butchers, fishermen and birdcatchers. They were not to marry old women or minor girls. They were expected to sacrifice property, life, honour and religion in the service of the emperor. These were the four grades of devotion, and one who sacrificed one of these four things was supposed to have possessed one degree of devotion. One who sacrificed two things, possessed two degrees of devotion, and so on.

The order had a few thousand members. But most of the prominent men in the empire did not enrol themselves, and Birbal was the only notable Hindu to accept it. Din Ilahi perished with Akbar's death, though Jahangir continued to make disciples after Akbar's fashion. Both Smith and Woolseley Haig have condemned Akbar for promulgating what they have termed a religion of his own. The former historian went to the length of saying that " the Divine Faith was a monument of Akbar's folly, not of his wisdom". The condemnation is unjust. Akbar's highest political object was the fusion of Hinduism and Islam and the establishment of cultural as well as political unity in the empire. The innovation was the outcome of his policy of universal toleration and a brilliant testimony to his national idealism.

It was inevitable that a fanatic like Badayuni and ardent Portuguese missionaries who entertained the sure hope of converting Akbar to Christianity but had failed to do so, should have become thoroughly dissatisfied and found fault with the tolerant king. There is little evidence to show that Akbar had recourse to compulsion or bribery to secure adherants to the Din Ilahi. Nor is it fair to hold merely on the testimony of the bigoted Badayuni and the disappointed Jesuit missionaries that Akbar indulged in the persecution of Islam. Akbar, no doubt, fancied himself to be the religious as well as the temporal head of his people. His conception of kingship was patriarchal in character and he considered himself to be the father of his subjects. Naturally, therefore, he arrogated to himself the position of the religious as well as the temporal head of the Indian people.

Akbar and Christianity.

A keen student of comparative religions, Akbar sent for Portuguese missionaries from Goa to be able to make a close study of the doctrines of Christianity. In response to his invitation three Christian missions visited his court at different dates and stayed with him long enough to explain to the emperor the principles and practices of their religion. The first mission consisting of Ridolfo Aquaviva, Antonio Monserrate and Enriquez (a converted Persian) reached Fatehpur Sikri on February 19, 1580 and stayed with Akbar till April 1582. The second mission consisting of Edward Leioton and Christopher de Vaga lived at the court from 1591 to 1592. The third mission consisting of Jerome Xavier, Emmanuel Pinheiro and Benedict de Goes reached Lahore, where Akbar happened to have his court in May 1595 and its head remained at the court till after Akbar's death in 1605. As the emperor was desirous of acquiring as complete a knowledge of the principles of Christianity as he could, he not only behaved like an apt pupil but also showed reverence to the images of Jesus, Mary and the Apostles, and often attended the Chapel and other ceremonies held by the Portuguese Fathers. He allowed them to build churches at Agra and Lahore to perform worship openly to celebrate their festivals and even to convert Hindus and Muslims to christianity. Besides treating the missionaries as first class State guests and giving them every comfort and facility, Akbar bore all their expenses. He allowed his sons to learn the Portuguese language and to acquire a knowledge of Christianity from the missionaries. His conduct and attention made the missionaries think that Akbar was well on the way of becoming a

Christian. They sent highly exaggerated and even false reports of their success to their superiors at Goa and Lisbon, to the effect that Akbar had banished Islam from his kingdom, converted mosques into stables, and even prohibited people from being named Muhammad and Ahmad. Not long after, however, they discovered that the emperor had no greater desire to embrace Christianity than Hinduism, Jainism or Zoroastrianism. The disappointed missionaries wrongly attributed it to his vanity and claim to prophetship, and to his inability to abandon his numerous wives and limit himself to only one as enjoined by Christianity. The silly gossip transmitted by the Portuguese fanatics has been credited with truth by many a modern European writer. V.A. Smith and Woolseley Haig presume, without reason, that Akbar had a better opinion of Christianity than of any other religion examined by him and that his political difficulties prevented him from embracing it. The fact, however, is that a rationalist as he was, Akbar would not believe in a religion that was based on mere revelation and authority.

Akbar and Jainism.

Jainism exercised even a more profound influence on the thought and conduct of Akbar than Christianity. He seems to have come into contact with Jain scholars quite early, owing probably to his alliance with the ruling families of Rajasthan, then the home of Jainism, and in 1568 he is said to have arranged a religious disputation between two Jain scholars representing two rival schools of thought. In 1582 he invited one of the greatest living Jain divines, Hiravijaya Suri of Tapa-Gachha, from Gujarat to explain to him the principles of his religion. He was received with all possible honour and so impressed Akbar by his profound learning and ascetic character that the emperor practically gave up meat diet, released many prisoners and prohibited slaughter of animals and birds for many days in the year. Hiravijaya Suri remained at the court for two years, was given the title of *Jagat-Guru*, and was placed by Abul Fazl among the twenty-one top-ranking learned men at Akbar's court, supposed to be acquainted with *the mysteries of both the worlds*. Subsequently several other Jain scholars visited the emperor, prominent among them being Shanti Chandra, Vijaya Sena Suri, Bhanu Chandra Upadhyaya, Harsha-Sar and Jayasoma Upadhyaya. A few Jain teachers of note continued to reside permanently at the court. In 1591 the emperor having heard of the virtues and saintly eminence of Jin Chandra Suri of Khartar

Gachha school invited him to the court. Travelling from Cambay, on foot, like other Jain monks, he reached Lahore in 1591 and was respectively received by the emperor. Like Hiravijaya Suri, he refused to accept costly gifts and presents and explained to Akbar the doctrines of Jainism with so much success that the emperor was highly gratified and conferred upon him the title of *Yuga Pradhan*. Jin Chandra Suri spent the four months of the rainy season at Lahore and in 1592 accompanied Akbar to Kashmir. He left Lahore in 1593. His influence on Akbar proved to be as profound and lasting as that of Hiravijaya Suri.

The teachings of the Jain monks (*Munis*) produced a remarkable change in Akbar's life. He gave up hunting of which he had been so fond in his early days and abstained almost wholly from meat diet. He restricted the slaughter of animals and birds, prohibiting it completely for more than half the days in the year. He even laid down the penalty of death for taking animal-life on prohibited days. *Farmans* were issued to all governors and local officers to abide strictly by the imperial injunctions.

Akbar and Zoroastrianism.

Zoroastrianism appealed to Akbar even more than Jainism. As early as 1573 he made at Surat his acquaintance with Dastur Mahyarji Rana of Navsari, the greatest Zoroastrian priest of the age. In 1578 he invited him to the court and learnt from him the doctrines and practices of the Parsee religion. Mahyarji Rana took a prominent part in the discussions held at the House of Worship and impressed Akbar so favourably that he adopted some of the practices of the Zoroastrian faith. Dasturji was rewarded by a grant of 200 bighas of land as subsistence allowance with the right to bequeath it to his son. After more than a year's stay at the court the priest returned to Surat (1579). Akbar adopted several practices of the Parsee religion. A sacred fire was prepared according to the Parsee rites and permanently preserved at the palace under the charge of Abul Fazl. The emperor began to show reverence to the sun, light and fire. When lamps were lighted in the evening the whole court was required to rise in reverence. Akbar performed sun worship by prostrating before it. He celebrated Persian festivals and adopted the ancient Persian calendar.

Akbar and Hinduism.

Probably Hinduism influenced Akbar much more than any other single religion so meticulously examined by him. It was not necessary to invite missions of Hindu scholars and saints, as he had from the very beginning been in touch with them and was acquainted with many Hindu beliefs and practices. But as Akbar was anxious to acquire a first hand knowledge of the principles and doctrines of that religion as given in the *Shrutis* and *Smritis,* he associated himself with prominent Hindus scholars, notable among them being Purushottam and Devi. They were drawn to the balcony of the private apartments of the royal palace during the night in order to explain to the emperor the mysteries of Hindu religion. The emperor adopted many Hindu beliefs and practices, such as, the transmigration of Soul and the doctrine of Karma. He adopted the Hindu way of life and began to celebrate many Hindu festivals, such as *Raksha Bandhan, Dasahra, Dewali* and *Basant.* Sometimes he would put the Hindu paint mark (*tilak*) on his forehead. In confirmity with the Hindu practice he began to appear every morning before his subjects at *jharokha darshan* and in many respects began to act like a Hindu king. On his mother's death he shaved himself clean and observed mourning in Hindu fashion. Had the Hindu pandits and princes been broad-minded enough to accept him as a member of our faith and had they made an attempt to rid Hinduism of idolatry and our society of caste system, Akbar would probably have embraced Hinduism. It is a pity that our ancestors of the second half of the 16th century betrayed reluctance to receive even Akbar as a member of their creed. Notwithstanding this prejudice not only the rank and file among the Hindus but even their scholars and chiefs looked upon the great emperor as one of themselves and invented a story to account for his leanings towards Hinduism. The tradition is recorded in the pages of Murtaza Husain Bilgrami's '*Hadiaq-tul-Aqalim*', and the present writer heard it also from his father who gave the story in detail. It is related that in his previous life Akbar was a Hindu anchorite, entitled Mukand Brahmachari, who was supposed to have undertaken a religious penance (*tap*) at Prayag so that he might be born a powerful Kshatriya king and exterminate Islam from India. But as luck would have it, he was, owing to a mistake in the performance of the *tap*, born a Muslim. Nevertheless, in view of his prenatal heritage, Akbar acted like a Hindu monarch that he was so anxious to be, and served the interest of Hindu religion and culture. Many a Hindu would not have his breakfast without having seen the

emperor's face (*darshan*) in the morning. Some flattering pandits went further and sought to establish that Akbar was the king of the world and the fountain-head of religion. Akbar repaid the compliment by trying to assimilate Hindu thought and by conforming to the Hindu mode of life.

Akbar not a religious hypocrite.

In spite of his religious vagaries, Akbar was not a hypocrite as has often been represented by disappointed missionaries and fanatics of various creeds. He was undoubtedly a sincere enquirer of truth. The testimony of Badayuni that he spent his morning time in meditation of God at Fatehpur Sikri and that he was a sincere Musalman upto 1578 has already been quoted. Abul Fazl informs us that the emperor's spacious heart was grieved to see narrow creeds preaching hatred against one another. He would often ask, "Have the religious and wordly tendencies no common ground" (*Ain*, Vol. I, p. 162). Akbar, after he had ceased to be a Muslim, performed private devotion four times a day, at sun-rise, noon, sun-set and midnight, spending a considerable time over them. These devotions consisted largely, in his later days, in reverence to the sun, fire and light. Jahangir declares in his autobiography that "his father never for a moment forgot God" (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, p. 27). Besides these formal religious exercises, Akbar's whole life presented a continuous attempt at search after the relations between God and man and many of his Happy Sayings prove beyond the shadow of a doubt his faith in the existence of God and his piety in the correct sense of the term. "There is no need," he observes, "to discuss the point that a vacuum in nature is impossible. God is omnipresent. There exists a bond between the Creator and the creature which is not expressible in language."

"That which is without form cannot be seen whether in sleeping or waking, but it is apprehensible by force of imagination. To behold God in vision is, in fact, to be understood in this sense" (*Ain*, Vol. III, p. 380). Many such quotations can be given, but the above will suffice to show that Akbar was pre-eminently a religious man. Like the great ancient Hindu king, Janak, who had earned the title of Raj Rishi, Akbar always acted on the maxim that one could be truly religious and yet could at the same time discharge his worldly duties with success. He used to say that even when engaged in earthly work, one should have constant thought of God. Such an attitude of mind was

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not only desirable but also feasible. He used to illustrate his point by giving an example of Indian women who would go out in batches to fetch water from rivers or tanks, place upon their head, one upon the other, two or three pitchers, laugh and joke among themselves, and yet would not allow a drop of water to fall.

Rebellion of Prince Salim, 1599-1604.

The later years of Akbar's life were clouded by anxiety caused by the unbecoming conduct and rebellion of his eldest son, his erstwhile darling Shaikho Baba, better known as prince Salim, who succeeded his father as emperor Jahangir. He was the child of many a prayer and was born of the Kachhwaha princess, the daughter of Bharmal of Amber, at the hermitage of Shaikh Salim Chisti of Fatehpur Sikri, on August 30, 1569. Akbar was so happy that he fulfilled a vow made at his birth by performing a pilgrimage, on foot, to the mausoleum of Shaikh Muin-ud-din Chisti of Ajmer. Yet this very child, who was brought up with all possible care and affection, rose into rebellion on attaining maturity and endeavoured to seize the throne from his great father. Contrary to Akbar's desire and hope Salim developed into a head-strong and ease-loving youth. In 1599, while the emperor was preparing for an expedition against Miran Bahadur of Khandesh, Salim was appointed governor of Ajmer and was charged with the task of reducing Rana Amar Singh of Mewar, who in conformity with the heroic tradition of his house, was gallantly waging an unequal struggle in defence of his ancestral dominion. Salim shunned an arduous campaign in the hills and jungles of Mewar and failed to do anything against the Rana. Akbar became angry and began to show preference for his third son Daniyal, the second one, named Murad, having died of *detirium tremens*, on May 12, 1599. Abul Fazl, who disliked Salim's sloth and softness, also exerted his influence against the prince. For these reasons Salim, who was tired of waiting for the throne, grew dissatisfied and decided to raise the standard of rebellion. He seized the immense wealth of Shabaz Khan Kambu, a noble who had died at Ajmer, and hastened towards Agra, enroute for Allahabad. Avoiding his grand-mother, who had advanced from Agra to see him and advise him to give up his rebellious intentions, Salim hastily crossed the Yamuna, proceeded to Allahabad, and captured the royal treasure from Bihar amounting to Rs. 30 lakhs. He appointed his own officers in the provinces of Allahabad, Awadh and Bihar and began to act like an independent ruler. Akbar, then engaged in the siege of Asirgarh in

Khandesh, pretended to disbelieve the news of his son's rebellion and wrote to him to behave. Salim sent an evasive reply, but continued to act as before. Next, the emperor sent Salim's class-mate, Sharif, to Allahabad to advise the prince to give up his evil designs, but the prince won him over and appointed him his minister.

After the fall of Asirgarh Akbar appointed Daniyal, viceroy of the Dakhin, which consisted of the *subas* of Khandesh and Berar and a part of Ahmadnagar, with its capital at Daultabad, and himself set out on his return journey to Agra to take suitable steps against Salim. He reached the capital on August 23, 1602 and opened negotiations with his son. But the latter's demands were so extravagant that they could not be complied with. Akbar's policy of mild remonstrance, however, succeeded in as much as the rebellious prince, who had advanced with a big force as far as Etawah, returned to Allahabad. He, however, refused to accept the governorship of Bangal and Orissa and struck, it is said, coins in his own name. Akbar now sent for his ablest and best friend Abul Fazl from the Dakhin to consult him regarding the measures to be taken against Salim. The prince, however, had Abul Fazl murdered, as the latter reached the vicinity of Narwar, by a rebellious Bundela chief, Bir Singh Deva of Orchha, on August 19, 1602. Akbar was filled with grief and rage and ordered Bir Singh to be captured and put to death. But the Bundela chief escaped and lived to enjoy the favours of Jahangir. Salima Begum now interceded for the rebel prince and was allowed to visit Allahabad. She succeeded in persuading Salim to proceed to Agra and submit to his father. The prince was conducted by his grand-mother into Akbar's presence. He placed his forehead on his father's feet and with tears in his eyes confessed his guilt and begged for his royal forgiveness. The emperor, who had no choice, pardoned him, raised him up, embraced him and accepted his presents which consisted of 12,000 gold mohurs and 770 elephants. This took place in February 1603. In October Salim was directed to lead an expedition against Mewar. He proceeded as far as Fatehpur Sikri and then requested permission to return to Allahabad in order to bring sufficient artillery for the campaign. Aware of the fact that Salim was averse to undertaking an expedition into Rajputana, Akbar granted his request. At Allahabad the prince became a confirmed drunkard and committed acts of revolting cruelty. Sometime in 1603 his first wife, sister of Man Singh and mother of Khusrav, succumbed to an over-dose of opium taken in consequence of his ill-treat-

ment, which brought about a complete estrangement between him and Man Singh. He flayed alive a news-writer who had reported his misconduct to Akbar. He beat one of his own servants to death and emasculated another belonging to his father. Furiously enraged Akbar proceeded towards Allahabad to chastise Salim, but had to return, on the first occasion owing to the grounding of his boat, next time owing to excessive rain and finally due to the serious illness of his mother who died on September 10, 1604, aged 77 years. Akbar's third son, Daniyal, had already died a premature death due to *delirium tremens* at Burhanpur, in April of the same year (1604). The two bereavements, coming as they did one after another within five months, unnerved the great emperor who must have longed for Salim's return to a sense of duty. The prince visited Agra on November 16 with the double object of offering his condolences to his father on the demise of the latter's youngest son and mother, and of being at hand in case he should collapse on account of the shock of his mother's death. The emperor betrayed no sign of displeasure when the prince paid his respects at the public audience, but afterwards he had him arrested and brought before him in the inner apartment of the palace. Then he rebuked him for his misdeeds, slapped him in the face and imprisoned him in a bath-room under the charge of Raja of Salivahan who was a physician of note, probably because the emperor believed that the prince was suffering from a mental malady and was in need of medical treatment. His principal followers were arrested and imprisoned. After ten days' confinement during which he was deprived of liquor and opium, the prince was released and assigned suitable quarter for his residence. Salim submitted and resigned himself to his father's will, thinking that if he misbehaved the emperor would nominate his son Khusrav as his heir-apparent and deprive him of his birth-right. The fear was not groundless, as he had so much discredited himself that some of the prominent nobles, such as, Man Singh and Khan Azam Mirza Aziz Koka, were openly supporting Khusrav who was then seventeen years of age and quite promising and popular. Salim humbly accepted the governorship of the western provinces, which had for some time been vacant on account of Daniyal's death. But he sent his deputies to conduct the government of the provinces, himself residing at Agra till his father's death.

Death of Akbar, 25-26 October, 1605.

Akbar fell ill on October 3, 1605, his trouble being dysentery or some kind of diarrhoea. His condition grew worse owing to

embittered relations between Salim and his son Khusrav and the intrigues of the nobles who became divided into two factions, one supporting Salim and the other Khusrav. It is said that Man Singh and Aziz Koka wanted to arrest prince Salim and to secure the throne for Khusrav. The emperor's physician Hakim Ali failed to diàgnose the trouble correctly and for eight days refrained from prescribing any medicine. Then he checked the patient's dysentery by administering strong astringent. This brought fever and strangury. On October 21 his condition became worse and he nominated Salim as his successor. That day Salim visited him, and, as the emperor could no longer speak, he made a sign to the prince to put on the imperial turban and to gird himself with the sword of Humayun. There was a recurrence of dysentery and Akbar died at midnight of October 25-26, 1605. According to Botelho, he died a Muslim; but there is no authentic evidence to support this view. Akbar was past speech during the last five days of his life and there is nothing on record to show that he recanted what some prejudiced writers have called his 'error'. His funeral was performed in accordance with Muslim rites, and he was buried at Sikandra, five miles from Agra.

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

Theory of Kingship.

Like his religious policy, Akbar's theory of kingship was the result of gradual evolution. During the early years of his reign his conception of his position and duty was that of an orthodox Muslim monarch. He was then the commander of the faithful (Amir-ul-Mummin) and defender and missionary of Islam, bound to carry out God's will as expressed in the Quran, and responsible to Him only. Like other Muslim monarchs he was at least in theory subordinate to the wishes of the entire Muslim population (*millat*) in the empire. The public opinion of the Muslim brotherhood or *millat* was guided and controlled by the Muslim learned divines, called the Ulema, who consequently claimed the right to influence the State policy, and who weilded great influence. Akbar sought to remove this check to his will and become the supreme authority over his Muslim subjects without being controlled either by the Ulema or the *millat*. He attained this object by promulgating, as we have seen, the so-called Infallibility Decree (*Mahzar*) in September 1579. The Ulema gave Akbar in writing the

authority to accept any of the conflicting interpretations of the law, which in his opinion was likely to be beneficial to the State, and also to adopt any line of action for the benefit of his subjects, provided he could quote in support of such an action a verse from the Quran. This in practice meant uniting ecclesiastical authority with that of secular power in his person. He had felt that the separation of these two authorities had weakened the State. The next logical step was to establish his claim to be an impartial ruler of all his people, Muslims as well as non-Muslims. This implied the establishment of a common citizenship on the basis of complete toleration to the non-Muslims and their association in the administration on equal terms with Muslims. Such a policy was sure to bring him into clash with orthodox Sunni Ulema and the Muslim nobility who had enjoyed a privileged position in the State. These two classes combined and raised the standard of rebellion. But Akbar with the support of the Rajputs and Persians and the tacit acquiescence of the bulk of the Sunni population emerged triumphant from the contest. The episode convinced him that the right course for him was to disregard the narrow basis of Islamic theory of kingship and to build up a new one based on the essential equality and welfare of diverse creeds and communities in the empire. The result of this conviction was the theory of divine right of monarchy so ably propounded by his scholarly secretary, Abul Fazl, who sought to prove that the king was something more than an average human being. He was God's representative on earth and His shadow (*Zill-i-Alhi*) and greater knowledge and wisdom were given to him than to any other human being.

" Kingship is a gift of God," writes Abul Fazl, "and is not bestowed till many thousand grand requisities have been gathered in an individual. Race and wealth and the assembling of a mob are not enough for this great position." (*Akbarnama*, Vol. II, p. 421). Akbar maintained, " The very sight of the kings has been held to be a part of divine worship. They have been styled conventionally as the shadow of God (*Zill-i-Alhi*), and indeed to behold them is a means of calling to mind the Creator." The king, according to Akbar, must be the best well-wisher and guardian of his subjects. He must be just, impartial and benevolent. He should look upon his subjects as his children and work day and night for their welfare. "Divine worship in monarchs," observes Akbar, "consists in their justice and good administration." "Tyranny is unlawful in every one specially in a

sovereign who is the guardian of the world." Akbar believed that the king must be absolutely tolerant to every creed and must establish universal peace in his dominion. After enumerating the qualities that an ideal monarch should possess, Abul Fazl concludes: "In spite of these qualities, he can not be fit for this lofty office if he does not inauguarate universal peace (toleration). If he does not regard all conditions of humanity and all sects of religion with the single eye for favour and not be mother to some and be step-mother to others, he will not become fit for the exalted dignity." (*Akbarnama*, Vol. II, p. 421). Akbar expresses the same view in a letter to Shah Abbas of Persia in which he writes that "divine mercy attaches itself to every form of creed and supreme exertions must be made to bring oneself into the vernal flower-garden of 'peace with all'. (*Sulah-i-kul*)."

This theory of divine origin of monarchy was accepted by a vast majority of the people. The Hindus accepted it, as it was akin to the ancient Indian ideal of sovereignty, and as they were assured of protection, justice and equality with Muslims. Barring a few religious fanatics, like Badayuni, Muslims also acquiesced in it, though it differed fundamentally from the Muslim theory in as much as it rejected the Quranic law as its basis and substituted 'the divine will which manifests itself in the intuition of kings.' The theory was one of benevolent despotism, and eminently suited the conditions and circumstances of the age.

The Sovereign, his powers and duties.

Akbar was an all powerful monarch. In fact he was despot, but enlightened as well as a benevolent despot. He was the head of the State, the supreme commander of the forces, and the chief executive, and possessed the supreme legislative authority. He was also the fountain-head of justice and personally decided cases and settled disputes. He was the guardian and father of his people. In spite of concentration of such wide powers, Akbar, like ancient Hindu kings, felt it binding to ascertain the wishes of the people, and hardly ever acted against their interests. But this was more or less a matter of personal discretion of the monarch. There was no written constitution to prescribe his duties, lay down his limitations and exercise a check on his despotism. He was not bound to any course of action except by the fear of a rebellion, a popular uprising and the traditional customary laws and precedents.

As the head of the State and government Akbar worked hard to discharge his manifold duties. We get a glimpse of his daily routine in the pages of Abul Fazl's Akbarnama from which we learn that he everyday appeared three times for state business. Early at sunrise he was ready at *jharokha darshan* to show himself to his subjects. Here he was accessible to the common people and listened to their complaints and transacted state business. Next he held an open court which generally lasted for four and a half hours. "Huge crowds assembled and there used to be much bustle." (*Badayuni*, Vol. II, pp. 325-26; *Akbarnama*, Vol. III, p. 237). People of all descriptions and of both the sexes were allowed to present petitions and to represent their cases in person. The emperor listened to them and decided their cases on the spot. Besides this, he transacted some other business also, such as reviewing the troops of the mansabdars. After thus working for four and a half hours the emperor retired. He appeared a second time in the afternoon and held a full durbar in the *Diwan-i-Am*. Here he attended to daily routine business, particularly that relating to the forces, to the workshops (*karkhanas*) and to the appointments and promotions of *mansabdars* and grant of *jagirs*. The meeting usually lasted for a little over an hour and a half. In the evening and often during the night he met his ministers and advisers in the private audience hall (*Diwan-i-Khas*) where special business relating to the foreign relations and internal administration was attended to. Late in the night he held consultation with his ministers on confidential matters of war and foreign policy or matters of the highest moment relating to the internal administration. This meeting was held in a room called Daulat Khana, which became known, in the time of Jahangir, Ghusal Khana, owing to its proximity to the royal bath-room. "His Majesty is accustomed," writes Abul Fazl, "to spend the hours of night profitably in the private audience hall. Eloquent philosophers and virtuous sufies are then admitted. There are also present in these assemblies unprejudiced historians ......On other occasions matters relating to the empire and revenue are brought up, when His Majesty orders for whatever has to be done in each case." Akbar devoted about sixteen hours a day to the business of the State. He was, however, wise enough to delegate much of the work to his ministers and officials, keeping in his hands the initiation of policy and the issuing of instructions and of seeing that they were properly complied with. Besides, he exercised successfully the functions of supervision and control over every department of administration. "A monarch," observes Akbar, "should not himself

undertake duties which may be performed by his subjects. The error of others it is his part to remedy, but his own lapses who may correct."

The Ministers.

The central government under Akbar, after it was well organised and evolved, consisted of four departments, each presided over by a minister. The ministers were—(1) Prime Minister (Vakil), (2) Finance Minister (Diwan or Wazir), (3) Pay-Master General (Mir Bakhshi), (4) Chief Sadr (Sadr-us-Sadur). Early in Akbar's reign ministers were usually appointed by the prime-minister and their number was not fixed. On taking the reins of government in his own hands Akbar deprived the prime-minister of this privilege. He began appointing and dismissing his ministers as he liked. There was no definite tenure of their office and no definite rules of promotion. Even the prime-minister was the king's creature and could be dismissed at royal will. The other ministers were distinctly the prime-minister's subordinates. The ministers did not constitute a council and were generally invited separately to discuss matters relating to their departments. Sometime the king took decisions on matters relating to various departments in consultation with the prime-minister only. He would even summon high officials other than the ministers to his council. The Mughul ministers did not constitute a cabinet in the modern sense of the term. They were secretaries rather than ministers, as the initiation of policy was in the hands of the emperor and not in those of ministers.

(*a*) **The Prime Minister** (*Vakil*). The Prime Minister under Akbar bore the title of Vakil. Sometime he was called Vakil-i-Mutlaq. Formerly he was the *de facto* head of all the departments of the central government and had the power to appoint and dismiss other ministers who were looked upon as his subordinates. But after the dismissal of Bairam Khan the Vakil was gradually deprived of these powers. First of all, the department of finance was taken out of his hands and a separate minister called Diwan was appointed to take charge of it. Next, he ceased to have full control over other departments. The Diwan, in course of time, became so important as to eclipse the authority and prestige of the Vakil. During the reign of Shah Jahan the Diwan became the grand wazir or prime-minister. The Vakil then ceased

to exist. For several years Akbar did not fill the post of Vakil, and he acted as his own prime-minister. When the office was revived, the Vakil was not entrusted with a portfolio. The post became ornamental and did not carry with it serious duties except those of an adviser to the emperor or of his vicegerent during his illness or absence from the capital.

(*b*) **The Finance Minister** (*Diwan or Wazir*). The finance minister of Akbar's time was called Diwan or Wazir. The first finance minister was Muzaffar Khan who presumed to work independently of the emperor and was removed and Raja Todar Mal was appointed in his place. Muzaffar Khan, Todar Mal and Shah Mansur were the three most notable finance ministers and all the three were skilled financiers and first rate administrators.

As the head of the finance department the Diwan was in charge of the revenues and expenditure of the empire. His main duties were to formulate rules and regulations for the land revenue settlement and for fixing the rates of other kinds of revenues, and to scrutinize and control disbursements. Almost all official records were sent to his office for his inspection and storage under his control. He had to scrutinize abstracts of all important transactions and payments. He was required to recommend appointment of provincial diwans and to guide and control them. He was required to affix his seal on all important revenue transactions, including grant of assignments and free grants of land.

The Diwan enjoyed wide powers and discretion. His work was so heavy that assistants had to be appointed to help him. One of these was Diwan-i-Khalsa who was incharge of Khalsa (crown or reserved) lands and the other was Diwan-i-Jagirs who was in-charge of the lands that were given away in lieu of service (assignment) or as free grants (sayurghal). The third was *Sahib-i-Taujih* who was incharge of military accounts. The fourth was Diwan-i-Bayutut whose duty was to supervise the accounts of various *karkhanas* or workshops attached to the court. The treasury, which was in charge of an officer called Mushrif-i-Khazana, was also under the control of the Diwan. All these officers were provided with necessary staff, consisting of accountants, clerks and peons.

As the department of finance was a most important branch of administration, Akbar took personal interest in its organization and working, and appointed a board consisting of five experts to review its activity from time to time.

(c) **The Mir Bakhshi or Pay-Master General.** The word Bakhshi seems to have been derived from the Sanskrit term Bhikshu. The office of Mir Bakhshi corresponded to the Diwan-i-Ariz of the Sultanate period. His rank was next to that of the imperial Diwan. He was required to maintain a register in which were recorded the names, ranks and salaries of the *mansabdars*. The salaries of all the officers were disbursed through his office. All orders of appointment to *mansabs* of all ranks were passed through his office. As the head of the military department he had to be in touch with every *mansabdar*. He was required to attend the royal durbar and stand on the right side of the throne. It was his duty to present candidates for service in the military department and to present also the soldiers and horses of the *mansabdars* before the king. One of his most important duties was to prepare a list of the guards who had to keep watch round the royal palace. The guards were changed every day and all high *mansabdars* had to perform this duty by turns. The Mir Bakhshi was also required to post news-writers and spies in different provinces and to receive their reports and present them before the king. A special officer was appointed for this work during the time of Akbar's successors. The Mir Bakhshi was not the commander-in-chief of the forces, but he was sometimes required to conduct important military operations. He maintained a big office and was required to issue certificates under his seal and signatures for grants of *mansabs*, sanctions of increments, branding of horses, assignments for guard duty and musters of troops. He had also to divide the army in different sections and to prepare a list of high officials who were required to attend on the king.

As the work of this department increased considerably, more than one bakhshi was appointed to assist the Mir Bakhshi. They were called Bakhshi No. 1, Bakhshi No. 2 and so on. The Mir Bakhshi divided the work of his office among them. There was a separate Bakhshi for Ahadi troops. There were two other kinds of Bakhshis, known as Bakhshi-i-huzur and Bakhshi-i-Shagird-pesha.

(*d*) **The Chief Sadr.** The Sadr-us-Sadur or the Chief Sadr was a very important minister and was required to discharge three-fold duties, namely, to act as the religious adviser to the emperor, to disburse the royal charity, and to function as the chief justice of the empire. During the early days of Akbar's reign the Chief Sadr enjoyed great power and prestige in all the three capacities. As the chief religious adviser he was required to give authoritative ruling on conflicting interpretations of *shara*, and to enforce it. It was his duty to see that the emperor and his government did not go astray from the injunctions laid down in the Quran and upheld the dignity of Islam. Another equally important duty of the Chief Sadr was to encourage Islamic learning. In order to achieve this object he had to be in intimate touch with the learned Muslim divines and to encourage them by grant of scholarships (wazayafs), subsistence allowances and free grant of lands (sayurghal). In all these matters he had a free hand during the early days of Akbar's reign. In his capacity as the chief qazi the sadr was the second highest judicial authority, next only to the emperor, who held court and decided cases, usually the appeals from the chief qazi's court. In this capacity the Chief Sadr recommended candidates for appointment to the posts of provincial, district and city qazis. Like other ministers he had an official establishment with clerks, accountants and peons.

After Akbar had reorganized his administration and rejected the Islamic theory of Government, the Chief Sadr naturally ceased to be his supreme religious adviser. In fact during the later days Akbar did not consult the orthodox Ulema. Under the new dispensation it was not necessary for the Chief Sadr to be the upholder of Islamic law or even himself to be deeply learned in Islamic theology. He was now required to possess absolutely different qualifications, which in the words of Abul Fazl were: "As the circumstances of the men have to be enquired into before grants are made, and their petitions must be considered in fairness an experienced man of correct intensions is employed for this office. He ought to be at peace with every party and must be kind towards the people at large in words and action. Such an officer is called Sadr." (*Ain*, Vol. I, p. 268). The sadr of Akbar's later days was no longer to encourage only Islamic learning or to patronise only Muslim Ulema. His duty was to disburse the royal charity to the people of all creeds.

Akbar clipped the powers of the Chief Sadr even so far as they related to the grant of scholarships and religious jagirs. He was required to recommend deserving scholars, pious men and indigent people; but generally the action was taken by the emperor himself. Akbar took personal interest and introduced several important reforms in the department. He laid down elaborate rules for the grant of land and prescribed qualifications of eligibility of holding lands and stipends. He conferred power on other important courtiers to bring deserving cases to his notice. In view of this it was not necessary that petitions for free grant of land should go to the emperor through the Chief Sadr only. An enquiry revealed that there had been great corruption in this department in the early days of his reign and many undeserving persons had been given free grants of land. Akbar ordered the resumption of such lands, and appointed separate sadrs in the provinces with a view to curtail the powers of the Chief Sadr. After these reforms the department functioned efficiently.*

Besides the four ministers, there was a Mir Saman (Lord High Steward) who wielded great authority and influence. He held the rank of a minister during the days of Jahangir and other Mughul emperors. Abul Fazl makes only a casual reference to this officer and does not describe his duties and powers as those of the ministers. In the time of Akbar he was placed under the diwan or wazir of the empire. Although he was not classed as a minister in the time of Akbar, Mir Saman was an important dignitary and was in charge of the royal household department including the royal harem, kitchen, guards and karkhanas (workshops). As such he must have wielded great authority and influence.

Provincial administration.

Akbar divided his empire into well defined provinces and established uniform administration in them. In 1602, the provinces numbered fifteen. They were: Allahabad, Agra, Awadh, Ajmer, Ahamdabad, Bihar, Bangal, Delhi, Kabul, Lahore, Multan, Malwa, Berar, Khandesh and Ahmadnagar. Kashmir and Khandhar were districts (sarkars) and were included in the province of Kabul. Sindh, which was then known as Thatta, was a district and was included in the province of Multan. Orissa formed a part of Bangal. The provinces were not of uniform size or income. They were known as subas.

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*_Ain,_ Vol. I, pp. 268-269.

The three provinces of the Dakhin, namely, Khandesh, Berar and Ahmadnagar were constituted into a single viceroyalty and were placed under Prince Daniyal.

Besides the provinces, there were within the empire many subordinate States which belonged to the chiefs who had accepted Akbar as their suzerain. These States were found in all parts of the empire and their rulers enjoyed varying degrees of power and prestige. They were enrolled as mansabdars in the imperial service and were required to be present at the court on important occasions and rendered military service whenever called. All these States were reckoned as so many districts (sarkars) and were attached to various subas within the boundaries of which they happened to have been situated.

In each suba there were a governor styled Sipah Salar, a diwan, a bakhshi, a sadr, a qazi, a kotwal, a mir-bahr and a waqa-navis. Each of these provincial officers had an official establishment of his own which consisted of clerks, accountants and peons.

Sipah Salar (*Governor*). The Sipah Salar was the head of the province and commanded a fairly big force. He was popularly called subahdar and sometimes only 'suba'. He was the vicegerent of the emperor and was appointed by him. He was responsible for the welfare of the people of his province and was required to administer even-handed justice. He decided criminal cases. He was to maintain peace and order, and to punish the disaffected and the recalcitrant. He was to appoint reliable and loyal men for police duty and for intelligence service. He was to encourage agriculture and construct works of irrigation, roads, sarais, gardens, hospitals, wells and similar other works. He was to see that the people enjoyed complete religious liberty. As his very name implied, he was a military officer and was required to maintain proper discipline among his troops and to exact obedience from them. He was entrusted with the work of realising the tribute from the vassal states situated within the boundaries of his suba.

The Diwan. The provincial diwan was the next most important officer in the suba. He was appointed on the recommendation of the imperial diwan, was responsible to him and was not subordinate to the governor. He was in charge of the finance department and his duties

were to collect revenue, to keep accounts of balances and receipts, to disburse the salaries of provincial officers and to administer civil justice. He was instructed to encourage the growth of agriculture and to keep a strict watch over the treasury. He was also to scrutinize the accounts of the revenue collectors (amils) and to see that there were no arrears of revenue. He was required to send regularly periodical reports of the condition of the province to the imperial diwan.

The diwan practically enjoyed the same status, though not the same authority, as the governor, was not responsible to the latter and in financial matters stood at par with him. Thus, there were two parallel and mutually independent authorities in every province—the Sipah Salar and the Diwan. The Sipah Salar was the head of the military, police and executive services, while the Diwan was the head of the civil and revenue branch. Each was required to keep watch and act as a check over the other. Each had to report to the court about the activities of the other. This was done in order to provide for a check on the ambitious designs of the high provincial officers and to prevent them from oppressing the people. In spite of the fact that these two officers were rivals, the provincial administration was so organized as to make co-operation and collaboration between them as the essential condition of their success. There was, therefore, in normal times harmony and co-operation in the provincial administration.

The Sadr and the Qazi. These two offices were generally combined and only one officer was appointed to discharge both the functions. It was the duty of the Sadr to recommend to the imperial sadr deserving persons for the award of cash stipends and free grants of land. The qazi was the head of the judicial department of the province and decided cases. In this capacity he was also required to supervise the work of qazis in the districts and towns.

The Provincial Bakhshi. The provincial Bakhshi was appointed on the recommendation of the Mir Bakhshi and was in charge of recruitment, organization, discipline and efficiency of the provincial army under the command of the Sipah Salar.

Waqaya Navis. Sometimes the provincial bakhshi was required to act as the Waqaya Navis of his suba. Often, however,

there was a separate officer to discharge this duty. He had to post news-writers and spies in all important places in the province, including the offices of the sipah salar, diwan, qazi, faujdar, the police officer etc. They were to submit their daily reports to him. He made an abstract of these reports and sent it to the court. As the success of the entire administration depended upon the efficiency of the secret service, great attention was paid to this branch. Sometimes the central government appointed news-writers and spies and sent them to the provinces and the parganas. These were required to act under the orders of the central government.

The Kotwal. The kotwal was in charge of the internal defence, health, sanitation and peace of the provincial capital. He had wide powers, and an office, and many subordinates. He was the supreme administrator of all the *thanas* of the province.

The Mir Bahr. The mir bahr was in charge of the customs and boats and ferry taxes, and port duties in coastal towns.

District administration.

The Faujdar. Each province or suba was divided into a number of districts (sarkars). Every district had a *faujdar*, an *amal-guzar*, a qazi, a kotwal, a bitikchi and a khazandar. The head of the district was faujdar, who, as his title shows, was a military officer. He had three duties to discharge. The first was to maintain peace and tranquillity in his jurisdiction, to keep the roads free from robbers and thieves, and to enforce imperial regulations. Secondly, being a military officer, he was in charge of a small force or local militia. It was his duty to keep this army well equipped and in readiness for service. Thirdly, he was required to assist the collector (amal-guzar) in the work of revenue collection. As the efficiency of the district administration depended upon the vigilence and personal character of the faujdar, Akbar devised means to keep an eye on him and other local officers. The central government kept itself in touch with the faujdar by sending high officials to inspect his work. The reports of the spies and news-writers also kept the central government informed of the activities of the district and pargana officers. Immediate action was taken if it was found that they were amiss in their duties or were oppressing the people.

The Amal-Guzar. The next important district officer was amal-guzar or revenue collector who was assisted by a large staff. Besides being the collector of revenue, he was also required to punish robbers and other miscreants in order to protect the peasantry. He was authorised to advance loans (taqavi) to the latter and to recover them gradually. He was also instructed to allow to the cultivators the concession of half a biswa on each bigha at the time of revenue collection and to redress their grievances. He was to supervise the work of the treasurer of his district and to send monthly reports of receipts and expenditure to the court and remit regularly the revenue of the district to the royal treasury.

The Bitikchi. Among the several assistants of the amal-guzar the Bitikchi occupied an important place. In fact, as far as revenue affairs were concerned, his rank was next to that of the amal-guzar. Although he was officially styled as a writer,* his duty was to prepare necessary papers and records regarding the nature of the land and its produce and it was on the basis of these records that the assessment was made by the amal-guzar. The bitikchi was required to obtain from the qanungos the statement of the average revenue of each village which was calculated on the basis of last ten years' produce. He was required to have a knowledge of the peculiar customs and land tenures obtaining in his district. He was to record the area of arable and waste lands of each village, to define the boundaries of the villages and to enter in his records the contracts made with the cultivators. "He shall note the name of the munsif, the superintendent, the land surveyor and the thanadar and also those of the cultivators and the headman and record below the kind of produce cultivated." He was to grant a receipt to the cultivator paying revenue into the treasury, scrutinize the records of the patwari and the headman, keep daily and monthly accounts of income and expenditure and forward monthly abstracts of the same to the court.

The Khazandar (*Treasurer*). The next officer attached to the collector in every district was the khazandar (treasurer). His main duties were to receive the revenue, to keep it and to forward it to the central treasury. He was instructed to accept coins of former reigns as bullion and not to harass the paying cultivators. He was to deposit the money safely into the treasury and to deliver one

* Bitikchi is a Turkish word meaning writer.

key to the collector and to keep the other with himself. He was not authorised to make any disbursements. Detailed instructions as to how the revenue from the district should be sent to the central treasury were laid down and were required to be scrupulously followed.

The Pargana.

The Shiqdar. Each sarkar was divided into a number of parganas or mahals. The pargana was the lowest fiscal and administrative unit of administration. There were four principal officers in every pargana. They were: the shiqdar, the amil, the fotadar and the karkuns. Besides, there were, as in the time of Sher Shah, two other semi-official functionaries, such as, the qanungo and the chaudhari. It seems that the functions and duties of the shiqdar remained the same as were in the time of Sher Shah. He was the executive officer of the pargana and was responsible for its general administration. Besides maintaining peace and order in the pargana, he had to receive the money when the cultivators brought it to pay in the pargana treasury, and to supervise and control the treasury staff. He used to administer criminal justice; but his powers as a magistrate were limited. It was his duty to forward such cases as did not fall within his cognizance to the kotwal of the sarkar.

The Amil. The amil (sometimes called Munsif) had to discharge the same duties in the pargana as the amal-guzar in the sarkar. His main work was that of assessment and collection of land revenue. He was required to deal directly with the peasantry and not through the headman of the villages. Besides, he assisted the shiqdar in the maintenance of law and order and punishment of miscreants. He was instructed to seek the assistance of shiqdar in the work of the collection of revenue. Probably he also dispensed civil justice.

The Fotadar. The fotadar was the treasurer of the pargana and had to discharge the same duties as the khazandar of the district. The karkuns were the writers and kept records of the arable land, the kinds of crops raised, the revenue payable from individual cultivator, and the actual collections and arrears, if any. Probably the records were kept in Persian during the later days of Akbar's reign.

The Qanungo. The qanungo was the head of the patwaris in the pargana and kept the records of the crops, the revenue demands,

actual payments, arrears etc., of the entire pargana as the patwari was required to do for the village. He was a repository of the knowledge of various kinds of land tenures and other peculiarities relating to the nature of the soil, assessment and collection of revenue. He was, therefore, called by Abul Fazl, "the refuge of the husbandman". He was formerly paid a commission of one per cent on the revenue of the pargana; but Akbar substituted cash salary from the treasury in place of the commission, and granted him an assignment of land for his personal maintenance.

Sea-ports and Frontier Outposts.

In addition to the parganas there were some other political and administrative divisions in certain localities. These were sea-ports, frontier outposts or frontier forts and thanas. The Mughuls had no Navy; but as their eastern and western frontiers touched the seas, they had a large number of sea-ports in their possession. The sea-ports were valuable owing to a large volume of trade that passed through them and also because those on the west coast were the places at which the Haj pilgrims embarked on their voyage for Arabia. Consequently, they were treated as administrative units. It is true that nominally they were attached as sub-divisions of a suba but in actual practice the officers appointed to keep watch over them acted under the orders of the central government. There was an officer in charge of the port. Sometimes more than one port was placed under the charge of one officer. In big ports, like Surat or Cambay, there were a faujdar, a qazi, a muhtasib, a darogha of the mint, a mutsaddi, a treasury officer, an accountant and a few karkuns. Surat was classed as a sarkar and comprised several parganas. It had a fairly strong force to guard it. Similarly, frontier outposts were garrisoned with troops and were administered as separate units. The ports as well as frontier outposts were particularly important for the lucrative trade that passed through them. In each of these places there was a customs house with a superintendent as its head and a large staff of clerks, peons, waiters and porters to collect the customs dues from the merchants.

Municipal administration.

The *Ain Akbari* gives a picture of the municipal administration during the reign of Akbar. Over every town of considerable importance a kotwal was appointed to take charge of what are, in

modern terminology, called municipal duties, besides police work. In small towns, where there was no kotwal, these duties devolved upon the amal-guzar of the district, who appointed suitable officers to discharge municipal and police duties under his supervision (*Ain*, Vol. II, p. 47). The kotwal was appointed by the central government and was the head of a small force adequate for maintaining order in the city. He was empowered to appoint city guards who were allotted separate parts of the city for watch during day and night. The kotwal was instructed to divide the municipal area into quarters or wards, each of which was put in charge of a subordinate officer appointed by the kotwal himself. In every city the artisans grouped themselves under various guilds, like the merchants guilds and the craftsmen guilds of medieval Europe. The kotwal usually recognised the guild master and sometimes he nominated one. There was also a broker through whom business was conducted. As the names of the various lanes in the old cities indicate, people following the same profession resided in the same lane. It was the kotwal's duty to keep himself in touch with the people and to have information about the condition of every family. He was required to know the coming and departure of guests of every household. "He was to keep a register of every house and frequented road, and engage the citizens in a pledge of reciprocal assistance, and bind them to a common participation of weal and woe." (*Ain*, Vol. II, p. 41). The kotwal was to look after the sanitation of the town and keep the public thoroughfare free from obstruction and nuisance. It was his duty to force the idle and the vagabond to some sort of work.

We have ample information about the powers and functions of the kotwal. His powers were large and responsibilities very heavy. His duties may be classified as follows :—

1. Watch and ward of the city.
2. Control of the market.
3. Proper care and disposal of heirless property.
4. Prevention of crimes.
5. Enforcement of Akbar's social reforms.
6. Control of slaughter houses and cemeteries.

"He was either to discover the thieves and the stolen goods or himself make good the loss." He controlled prices, inspected

markets, and weights and measures. If any citizen or merchant from outside died without leaving heirs, the kotwal was to take an inventory of his belongings and make arrangements for the safety of his property and to deliver it to the legitimate heirs. He was to see that the security of life, liberty and property were guaranteed to the people, and he was enjoined not to violate on any account the privacy of domestic life. He was also required to supervise the slaughter houses, which were erected outside the city, and not to allow any animal to be killed on certain fixed days of the year. He had to see that butchers, hunters of animals and washers of the dead were segregated in a particular part of the city and were prevented from mixing with other people. "He was required to look after the housing and comforts of the foreigners, who were lodged in a separate sarai and whose actions and movements, going and coming were carefully watched."

Akbar organised the city administration on ancient Hindu model. The city became the seed-pot of his social and humanitarian activity. The kotwal was required to enforce the imperial regulations regarding the prohibition of the *sati*, forcible conversion to Islam, performance of circumcision under the age of twelve, child marriage, infanticide and immorality. Women of ill fame were segregated and compelled to live outside the city. It was the kotwal's duty to keep a list of such women and watch all those people who visited them.

The kotwal's duties being very heavy he was empowered to employ requisite number of assistants, such as police officers, spies, clerks and peons. The uniforms of the kotwal and the city police were of red colour.

Village Communities.

The most important constitutional contribution of our race was in the field of rural administration. Since time immemorial there have existed in India well organised village communities fittingly styled village commonwealths, which constituted brotherhoods and managed their affairs on democratic lines. The village communities existed as autonomous units throughout the medieval period. The Sultans of Delhi did not find it profitable and practicable to interfere with them and, therefore, left them alone and allowed

them to lead their own life. Sher Shah kept touch with village communities through the semi-official functionaries, namely, the headmen, the patwaries and the chaukidars. Akbar went a step further. He recognised the village panchayat as a legally established court of justice and upheld its decisions. He brought the patwari and the chaukidar into intimate touch with the pargana government. Although he did not interfere with village life and administration, he added to its prestige by according official recognition to its activities.

Contemporary authorities do not furnish us any material on the basis of which it might be possible to construct a complete picture of the village administration during the reign of Akbar. Even Abul Fazl makes only casual references to village life. But as the village commonwealth functioned satisfactorily till after the middle of the nineteenth century A. D. and in some cases it does even now, it may be presumed that the village government not only existed throughout the ancient and medieval times but also made a substantial contribution to the administration, stability and well-being of our people. Every village constituted a village community. It had a council consisting of heads of the families inhabiting it. The council was responsible for the village administration, such as, watch and ward, sanitation, elementary education, irrigation, medical relief, public works, moral and religious welfare of the people, and the dispensation of justice. It also made arrangements for recreation, amusements and celebration of festivals. There was a panchayat for trying cases. We have it on the testimony of an inscription of the early tenth century A. D. that the village council or panchayat was divided into six sub-committees, each of which was entrusted with separate duties. (*Village Government in British India* by John Mathai, pp. 25-26). The sub-committees were :—

1. Annual committee.
2. Garden committee.
3. Tank committee.
4. Gold committee.
5. Committee of justice.
6. Panchvara committee.

The members of the sub-committees were chosen by some sort of election, and often, it may be presumed, unanimously.

Besides, there were caste panchayats to decide caste and family disputes. In every village there were one or two watchmen, a priest, a school master, an astrologer, a carpenter, a blacksmith, a potter, a washerman, a barber, a physician and a patwari or an accountant. These were reckoned as village functionaries. They carried on village administration in the spirit of mutual co-operation.

The village was a self-sufficient commonwealth and its members stood together in weal and woe. The existence of village communities was responsible for the preservation of our society and culture through the ages.

The Army: The Mansabdari System.

During the early years of his reign, Akbar's army was mostly foreign in personnel consisting, as it did, of Mongols, Turks, Uzbegs, Persians and Afghans who had followed Babur and Humayun as their regular troops or camp-followers. The commanding officers were of the same race as the troops and were granted large assignments of land in lieu of their salaries. In view of Humayun's deficiency as a leader of men and the semi-independent position of the commanders, the military aristocracy was inclined to be insubordinate, making the Mughul army a weak instrument of force. The officers did not maintain the number of troops which they were required to have. They resorted to irregularities and fraudulent practices and cheated the government and the soldiers alike. They attempted to resist every reform and tried to prevent Akbar from centralizing the authority and making the army a unitary organization. During his early days, Akbar had to face numerous rebellions on the part of his Mughul and Uzbeg officers. He was forced to the conclusion that there was no other way of establishing his authority except by taking the absolute power of direction and control in his own hands, reducing the insubordinate military officers and reorganizing the army in such a manner as to stamp out corruption and to convert it into a powerful disciplined force. The result was the *mansabdari* system.

The word *mansab* means place or rank, and *mansabdars* were, therefore, holders of ranks in the imperial service. The lowest rank was that of ten and the highest that of ten thousands. Towards the end of his reign, Akbar raised the highest rank to twelve thousands.

(*Badayuni*, Vol. II, p. 342). At the time of the establishment of the *mansabdari* system the ranks above five thousands were reserved for the imperial princes, that is, the emperor's sons and grandsons; but subsequently Raja Man Singh, Mirza Aziz Koka and one or two other top-ranking officials were promoted to the rank of 7,000. Thereafter, the *mansabs* of 8,000 and above were meant for the members of the royal family. In the beginning Akbar had established only one class or grade for each *mansab*. But towards the end of his reign, he introduced three grades in each of the *mansabs* from 5,000 downwards by instituting what is known as the *sawar* rank. Thus many mansabdars held a double rank, *i.e.*, both *zat* and *sawar* ranks. The *mansabdars* were not required to maintain the full number of troops indicated by their ranks or *mansabs*. For example, a *mansabdar* of 1,000 was not required to have 1,000 troops under his command. It is consequently wrong to call a *mansabdar* of 1,000 as the commander of 1,000, as has been done by some historians, including Blochmann, W. Irvine, V. A. Smith, and others. The *mansabdars*, no doubt, were required to maintain a certain number of troops in their employ; but it was only a fraction of their ranks. The *mansabs* were a convenient method of fixing the status and salaries of the imperial officers. It was not necessary that a *mansabdar* of high rank should be employed on a correspondingly high post in the service. Raja Man Singh enjoyed the rank of 7,000, but he was never employed a minister at the court. The ministers held *mansabs* inferior to that of Man Singh. Similarly, Abul Fazl held much smaller a *mansab* or rank than that of many members of the imperial service, and yet he enjoyed a higher post than those who were superior to him in rank and salary. Nor was it necessary that a *mansabdar* must be employed on a regular post or duty. Some *mansabdars* had no duty except that of waiting on the emperor and performing the work which they might be called upon to do from time to time. The services were not classified into civil service and military service, and any *mansabdar* was liable to be called upon to discharge either duty at any time in his career. All imperial officers, except perhaps the *qazis* and the sadrs, were enrolled as members of the *mansabdari* system and were required to maintain some troops proportionate to their ranks. All the vassal chiefs, who were rulers of semi-independent states, were also enlisted as *mansabdars* and were required, like other *mansabdars*, to maintain regular troops under their command and to bring them for muster or review at stated intervals. There

were no fixed rules of appointment, promotion or dismissal of the *mansabdars* who held offices at the pleasure of the sovereign and were promoted, degraded or dismissed at his will. The usual practice, however, was that when a *mansabdar* did well at muster and brought the requisite number of troops, who were found smart and well disciplined, he was promoted to the next higher *mansab*. Sometimes an exceptionally competent *mansabdar*, who pleased the emperor by loyal and devoted service, was given an abnormally high lift. It was not necessary for a *mansabdar* to pass through various grades in order to reach a high *mansab*. The *mansabdars* were paid high salaries in cash and sometimes by assignments of land expected to yield the revenue corresponding to the salaries fixed for particular *mansabs*. Akbar, however, preferred payment in cash to that by grant of land. Even when a *mansabdar* was paid by assignment of land, he was not allowed to retain it for a long time, and his assignment was transferred from province to province. After the institution of the *mansabdari* system, the assessment and collection of land revenue in the assigned areas, too, were done by the officers of the revenue department, and not by the agents of the assignees who had no power to increase the fixed demand or realise from the cultivator anything in excess of the fixed revenue. It has been supposed by some writers, notably Irvine, Smith and Moreland, that the *mansabdars* were not paid for all the twelve months of the year, but for seven to nine months, and sometime only for four months. This is not borne out by contemporary authorities which clearly state that the *mansabdars* were paid salaries for the full year. The misunderstanding seems to have been caused by the fact that the government deducted the money on account of loans and cost of equipment supplied from the salary of the *mansabdars* concerned and 5 p. c. of the salary of every trooper under a *mansabdar* on account of the trooper's equipment.

Mansabdars were allowed to recruit their own troops who generally belonged to his own race or tribe. Most of the *mansabdars* were foreign Turks, Persians and Afghans and indigenous Rajputs. There were some Arabs and men of other foreign nationalities also. The number of Indian Muslims holding high ranks was small. The *mansabdars* were required to purchase their own horses and equipment; but sometimes these were supplied by the government. At the time of enlistment and first muster the descriptive roll of the troops and of horses under a *mansabdar* were recorded and the horses branded.

Each horse bore two marks, the government mark on the right thigh and the *mansabdar's* mark on the left thigh. Every *mansabdar* had to undergo periodical musters, which occurred sometimes once a year and sometimes every three years, when troops had to be presented and inspected. Each *mansabdar* had a fixed rate of pay out of which he had to defray the cost of his establishment and the salary of his troops. His salary, even after deducting the cost of establishment, was very handsome, as the following table given by Moreland will show:—

Rank	Monthly salary in rupees			Cost of appropriate force
	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class	
5,000	30,000	29,000	28,000	10,600
3,000	17,000	16,800	16,700	6,700
1,000	8,200	8,100	8,000	3,000
500	2,500	2,300	2,100	1,170
50	250	240	230	185
10	100	82½	75	44

Zat and Sawar.

Scholars hold divergent opinions about the significance of *zat* and *sawar*. According to Blochmann, *zat* indicated the number of troops which a *mansabdar* was expected to maintain, while *sawar* meant the actual number of horsemen that he maintained. On the other hand, Irvine holds that the *zat* indicated the actual number of cavalry, while *sawar* was an honour and represented like the *zat*, the actual number indicated by it. According to Dr. R. P. Tripathi, the *sawar* rank implied an additional honour but no obligation on the part of the *mansabdar* to maintain the number of horsemen indicated by it. He was, however, paid an extra allowance for the *sawar* rank. Mr. Abdul Aziz is of the opinion that the *zat* rank imposed an obligation to maintain a fixed number of elephants, horses, beasts of burden and carts, but no horsemen or cavalry, whereas *sawar* represented the actual number of cavalry under a *mansabdar*. Blochmann's interpretation seems to approximate to the actual state of affairs as it existed after the institution of the *sawar* rank. It appears that for several years after the establishment of the

mansabdari system *mansabdars* of various ranks failed to maintain and bring to muster the numbers of cavalry fixed for their several ranks. Moreover, the lumping together of horses, horsemen (cavalry), elephants, camels and oxen, etc., in each rank caused confusion. It was probably to put an end to this confusion and to secure an absolute compliance of the number of horsemen fixed for each rank that Akbar instituted the *sawar* rank, as distinct from the *zat* rank. Thereafter the *zat* rank indicated the number of horses, elephants, beasts of burden and carts required to be maintained, but not horsemen or cavalry. The *zat* rank was not personal rank, as has been wrongly supposed by modern scholars. The *sawar* rank, on the other hand, indicated the actual number of horsemen to be maintained by a *mansabdar* in Akbar's reign. Under his successors this regulation became a little lax, and the number of horsemen fell below the *sawar* rank.

The Three Grades.

It has been pointed out that every *mansab* of 5,000 and below comprised three grades, namely, first grade, second grade and third grade. A *mansabdar* belonged to the first grade of a particular rank, if his *sawar* rank was the same as his *zat* rank. If, on the other hand, his *sawar* rank was less than *zat* rank but did not fall below half that of the *latter*, he belonged to the second grade in that rank. But, if his *sawar* rank was less than half of his *zat* rank or he had no *sawar* rank at all, he belonged to the third grade in that rank. For example, a *mansabdar* of 5,000 *zat* belonged to the first grade in the rank of 5,000, if his *sawar* rank was also 5,000. He belonged to the second grade, if his *zat* rank was 5,000 and *sawar* rank 2,500. And if his *zat* rank was 5,000 and *sawar* rank less than 2,500, he belonged to the third grade. This rule was applicable for all *mansabs*. A further complication was introduced by the institution of what are known as *du aspa* and *sih aspa*. But we are not concerned with them here, as these additions were made in the time of Akbar's successors.

Some *mansabdars* commanded troops that were recruited directly by the state and not by the *mansabdars* concerned. Such troops were called *dakhili* or supplementary troops. There were *dakhili* cavalry and *dakhili* infantry. Besides, there were gentlemen troopers called *Ahadis*. They were recruited individually and were under the command of a separate *mansabdar* or officer, and had a

diwan and a *bakhshi* of their own. *Ahadis* were considered very efficient and loyal troops, and were paid high salaries; sometimes each *ahadi* trooper at Rs. 500/- per month.

The Mughul army comprised cavalry, infantry, artillery and elephantry, but no navy. Cavalry was by far the most important branch and was regarded the 'flower of the army'. It was drawn mostly from the *mansabdars* and the *ahadis*. The infantry was not of much consequence. It consisted of match-lockmen, archers, Mewatis, swordsmen, wrestlers, mace-bearers, porters and *chelas* (slaves). The match-lockmen or *bandukchis* formed the most important branch of infantry. We know from the *Ain Akbari* that the total number of match-lockmen under Akbar was 12,000. The Mewatis numbered a few thousands and were noted for their qualities as soldiers and skill as detectives. They were mostly employed as dispatch runners. There were one lakh of swordsmen of which 1,000 were kept in readiness for service at court. They were noted for their bravery, ability and swordsmanship. Porters and mace-bearers were also classed as soldiers. Artillery was not a very efficient branch, in spite of the fact that there were large pieces of ordnance, which were carried by many elephants and thousands of bullocks. There were many kinds of guns. There was an officer in charge of this branch of the army, known as *Mir Atish*. Besides, there were war elephants who were used in various ways. They carried baggage. At the time of battle they were furnished with defensive armours and offensive weapons. They caught hold of enemy soldiers, dashed them against the ground and trampled them under foot. They carried guns on their backs which were ignited and fired in battles. Such guns were called 'gajnals'. A 'gajnal' elephant carried two soldiers and two pieces of ordnance.

According to Blochmann, Akbar's standing army, equipped and maintained from the imperial treasury, was not more than 25,000. Later investigations have shown that these figures are much too low. We know that the standing armv maintained by Jahangir and Shah Jahan was not less than three lakhs strong. The numerical strength of Akbar's standing army could not have been less than three hundred thousands. In these figures should be included the contingents of *mansabdars* as well as the army directly attached to the emperor. The infantry which was much larger is exclusive of these figures.

Akbar bestowed a great deal of thought and attention on his military establishment and laid down minute rules and regulations regarding its organization, equipment and discipline. A separate department of branding (*Dagh Mahali*) was established under an officer, assisted by several clerks. Every care was taken to see that the regulations were faithfully observed and the discipline of the army was not impaired. Being an unfailing judge of human character, the emperor almost invariably appointed brave and competent *mansabdars*. He unerringly laid his finger on the weak points in his military department and removed its deficiencies without loss of time. He succeeded in making the system work so efficiently that he earned the credit of having a lifetime's unbroken record of victories in the field of battle.

The system was, however, inherently weak. Contemporary writers, specially Badayuni, have given graphic details how during the first half of Akbar's reign *mansabdars* cheated the government by bringing to muster men from the streets in military uniform and passing them off as soldiers. It was by no means rare for troopers to substitute indifferent horses for good ones supplied to them by the military department. It took Akbar many years indeed to stamp out corruption. After 1581 we do not hear of many cases of proxies of men or horses at musters or misappropriation of soldiers' salaries by their *mansabdars*. But this was because of Akbar's uncommon ability as a leader and administrator and vigilance and discipline. Individual troops under the system were more loyal to their chiefs than to the emperor. The division of the army was *mansabdar-wise* and a *mansabdar* commanded the same troops throughout his life. There were no transfers of officers from regiment to regiment. Secondly, within a *mansabdar's* division there was no classification of troops into regiments. All the troops were immediately under him and every soldier had personal relations with him. Nor was the numerical strength of each arm regulated and fixed in a *mansabdar's* contingent. Thirdly, corruption in some form or other was unavoidable in a system which left the duties of recruitment and administration of the army to the *mansabdars*, that is, the commanding officers themselves. Fourthly, the practice of payment through the *mansabdars* was pernicious and led to abuses. Fifthly, the *mansabdari* system had no organic centre and lacked the cohesive force which must always be essential in a national army. Sixthly, the standard

of efficiency varied from unit to unit under various *mansabdars* and there was no uniformity of weapon, equipment, or discipline. Seventhly, the pomp and display which had become natural with the *mansabdars* acted as an obstacle to military efficiency. Although Akbar sometimes brushed aside all pomp and display in times of emergency, under normal circumstances his army was encumbered with numerous attendants, dancing girls, elephants, camels, bands, offices, workshops and bazars. Eighthly, artillery was the weakest branch of the army and in spite of much show of big cannon, *rakhlas* and *gajnals*, it proved ineffective against a fort like Asirgarh. Finally, Akbar's army consisting, as it did of officers and troops of several nationalities, over two-third of whom were foreigners, was not a national army, and was not bound by common interests and common sentiment of love of the country. On account of these inherent weaknesses the Mughul army considerably deteriorated under Akbar's successors.

In spite of so many defects the *mansabdari* system was an improvement upon the military establishment of the medieval period. It was a sort of compromise between tribal chieftainship and the feudal system of levying troops. It combined the advantages of both the systems. Moreover, it was designed to tap every source of fighting strength in the country. Various units were particularly suited to certain special kinds of military duties. For example, certain Rajput *mansabdars* were diplomatically used against certain other Rajput chiefs with whom they were at feud. The system assured steady loyalty of the *mansabdars* to the emperor and offered an incentive for individual distinction. Every *mansabdar* was aware that his promotion or degradation depended upon his loyalty and quality of his service. Through them was ensured the loyalty of the important military and political sections of the population of the country.

Finance.

Although the modern science of Public Finance had not yet come into existence, Akbar's financial policy was highly developed and much in advance of the age. The emperor was conversant with the implications of the problem and was assisted by competent financiers, like Raja Todar Mal, Muzaffar Khan, and others who were well acquainted with the main problem of reconciling the interests of the people and the needs of the government, and of

advancing the well-being of both. But Akbar's financial system, as it came to exist during the later years of his reign, was not established without considerable effort and experimentation. In fact, he devoted years of sustained labour and thought before he could place the finances of his empire on sound scientific foundation.

Akbar did not believe in the Islamic theory of taxation, which recognized only four sources of revenue, namely, *kharaj*, *khams*, *zakat* and *jizya*, the last two being religious taxes. On the contrary, his theory of taxation was akin to that of the ancient Hindus and seems to have been derived from our ancient literature. In describing the theory Abul Fazl says that the existence of a just monarch is essential for the protection of life, honour, property and liberty of the people, and the former has, therefore, to be paid for his services to the public. As the quality and nature of the soil differ in various countries, "the administration of each state must take these circumstances into consideration and fix its demand accordingly". (*Ain*, Vol. II, p. 55).

The fiscal sources of the empire were divided into two main divisions—central and local. The central revenue was derived from Commerce, Mint, Presents, Inheritance, Salt, Customs and Land. Of these the land revenue was the most lucrative and important. Quite early in his reign Akbar had abolished the religious taxes charged from the Hindus, such as, the pilgrims' tax and the *jizya*, which were realised with punctilious care by all his Muslim predecessors. Zakat which was of two kinds, namely, first a religious tax from the Muslim to be spent for religious and charitable welfare of the Muslim only, and second on cattle and some other articles, lapsed gradually. This was natural in a state in which secular element predominated over the religious. The state not only derived revenue from the commerce but also sometimes participated in it. All kinds of ammunition, particularly lead and salt petre, were state monopolies. There were attached to the imperial household department many workshops, which, though not primarily meant for revenue, brought much income to the exchequer. Mints for the issue of various kinds of coins were established in several towns; those too constituted a source of revenue. The emperor used to receive costly presents from officials, nobles, vassals and foreign visitors. He invariably gave something in return but it was slight as compared

to the value of the presents. The royal treasury thus acquired lakhs of rupees every year. All unclaimed and heirless property also passed to the state. The emperor, however, did not escheat the property of nobles or officials on their death, as has been erroneously supposed by European travellers and writers. A salt duty was levied. Customs duties ranged from 2½ to 5 per cent. Ports brought in a lot of revenue from this source. Local revenues came from octroi duties, ferry and road taxes, and from several *abwabs* (cesses).

The revenue from all the above sources amounted only to a small fraction of the income from land, which according to the calculations of W. H. Moreland, was, during the later years of Akbar's reign, ninety millions of rupees. The land revenue was charged on the basis of the government records which were prepared after ascertaining the average produce of various kinds of lands for ten years. The system was the result of a series of experiments undertaken during the early years of Akbar's reign. On taking over the administration from the hands of Bairam Khan in 1560, Akbar found his small kingdom parcelled among his officials and soldiers, leaving for the crown a comparatively small portion known as the *khalsa* or the crown or the reserved land. As it was in the interest of the administration to satisfy jagirdars, the revenue figures were magnified, *i.e.*, the revenue of the jagirs and consequently of the whole empire was shown larger than what it really was. There was hardly any money in the treasury. On one occasion it failed to produce Rs. 15/- that Akbar needed for some urgent business. The incident compelled him to pay an immediate attention to his finance department. Thereafter he made a series of experiments for improving it. The first of these was undertaken in 1563 when Akbar appointed Aitmad Khan to look into the affairs of the *khalsa* lands, which comprised the provinces of Agra and Delhi and a part of Lahore. These two and a half subas were divided into several areas, each yielding a crore of dams or two and a half lakhs of rupees. The measure introduced made no fundamental change in the system of assessment. Sher Shah's schedules of assessment, which were in vogue since the time of Humayun and uniformly applied to all the parganas of his dominions, the rates differing only in respect of each crop, continued in operation as before. The land was measured locally and the state demand was converted into cash on the basis

of the prices of various kinds of crops fixed by the emperor. The prices fixed were also uniform for all the parganas and were usually those current in the vicinity of the capital or the court. In 1566 the second experiment was undertaken. Muzaffar Khan, who was appointed diwan in 1564 with Todar Mal as his assistant, noted two glaring defects in the system, namely, the fictitious roll rent and the unfairness of converting the state demands into cash on the basis of only one schedule of prices for the whole of the empire. He achieved some success, but as the state did not yet make an arrangement for the measurement of land by its own officials and also failed to utilise the records of the patwaris in the villages, the rent roll (Hal-i-Hasil or *Juma' Bundi*) prepared by Muzaffar Khan in 1566 did not fully correspond to the actual revenue. He, however, succeeded in doing away with the second defect. As a result of his efforts, the state demand was henceforth commuted into cash, not on an uniform basis but on that of the prices current in different localities. This removed only one defect in the system. So another experiment was undertaken in the thirteenth year (1569) of the reign, when Shihab-ud-din Ahmad, the new diwan, abandoned Sher Shah's schedule of assessment so far as the *khalsa* land was concerned, and introduced the practice of calculating the state demand by ascertaining in a rough manner the produce of the fields. This system, technically called *nasq*, and popularly *kankut*, implies a rough estimate of the produce of the soil without measuring the unthrashed crop or grain. When the crops ripen but are still standing in the field the government agents go round each field, accompanied by the village headman and one or two other respectable people, and each man separately makes an estimate of the total yield of the field. The mean of all the separate estimates is set down as the total produce of the field on the basis of which the government share is calculated. If the cultivator of the field objects to the estimate as being too high, negotiations follow and after some higgling, a compromise is arrived at. It is not clear whether the system introduced in 1569 was field-wise or village-wise.

The fourth experiment occurred in the fifteenth year of the reign (1570-71) when the new schedules of assessment rates were prepared separately for each pargana and were based on the actual produce of the soil. The system was extended to include the jagir lands which had till that time been outside the scope of the experiment

and of the control of the revenue ministry. The *nasq* was abandoned and the schedule of assessment rates were prepared on the basis of the measurement of land and ascertainment of the actual produce by government officials. Raja Todar Mal was the author of the scheme.

This experiment apparently proved very successful, for the assessment schedules prepared on its basis remained in force for ten years, *i.e.*, upto 1580. At the end of this period Akbar made only one more major experiment, which was to fix the assessment rates in cash. Though the rates of assessment of various kinds of grain had remained unchanged for ten years, the prices on the basis of which the state demand in kind was commuted into cash had varied from year to year and had every year required the emperor's sanction. The result was delay in the collection of revenue, as the emperor could not remain at one place and give orders for fixing the prices as soon as their tables were placed before him. To do away with this difficulty Akbar in 1580 abandoned the schedules of assessment rates in kind and fixed them in cash. The prices on the basis of which the demands in kind were commuted into cash were the average of last ten years' prices in various localities.

The revenue settlement brought into existence in 1580 by the *Ain-i-Dahsala* ordinance implied certain fixed processes. First of all, the land in the empire was surveyed according to a uniform system of measurement, based on Sikandar Lodi's *gaz* or yard, measuring 41 digits or 33 inches. The *jarib* based on the *gaz* used by Sher Shah was made of hempen rope and was liable to contract and expand in cold and hot weathers respectively. Akbar substituted a bamboo *jarib* whose pieces were joined together by iron rings. The *bigha* which was the unit of area measured 60 yds. by 60 yds. or 3600 sq. yards. The total area of cultivable land in the possession of each cultivator in each village, each pargana, each district, and each province, and finally of the whole empire was ascertained. Secondly, all the cultivable land was classified into four divisions. The basis of classification was not the kind of land or fertility of the soil, but the continuity or otherwise of its cultivation. (1) The *polaj* land belonged to the first category and was always cultivated. (2) *Parauti* land too was almost always cultivated but left fallow for a year or two in order to recuperate its fertility. (3) *Chachar* land

had to be left uncultivated for three or four years. (4) *Banjar* land had to be left fallow for five years or more. Each of the first three kinds of land was sub-divided into three grades and the average produce of the three grades of each was taken and considered as standard for each class. Thirdly, on the basis of past ten years' produce the average yield per bigha of each kind of land in respect of every crop was ascertained separately for every *pargana*. The state charged one-third of the average produce. Fourthly, the state demand in kind was commuted into cash. For this purpose, Akbar divided his entire empire into many *dasturs*. All the places in a *dastur* were supposed to have uniform prices for each kind of corn. An average of last ten years' prices in respect of each kind of crop was ascertained separately for each *dastur*. The average was considered as the current price of grain. There were separate schedules of prices of different kinds of corn and the schedules of prices differed from *dastur* to *dastur*.

The state demand from each cultivator was fixed on the basis of the above calculation. It was not necessary to ascertain every year the actual produce or the current prices of grain in order to fix the state demand from the cultivators. All that was needed was to find out the kind and area of land under cultivation and the kind of crop raised by a cultivator in a given season. And both the cultivator and the government would calculate the amount of revenue the former was required to pay and the latter to realise. The government was in a position to ascertain its land revenue within a month or so of the termination of the seed-sowing season. It did not, however, imply that after the introduction of the *Ain-i-Dahsala* the government ceased to maintain the records of the produce and of prices of corn. The officials in the parganas and in the villages continued as before to record the name of each kind of land, its area, its produce including the particulars of the crops, in the possession of every cultivator. They also recorded the current prices of all kinds of grain in each *dastur*. These records were absolutely necessary and served the basis of future settlements.

Scholars have held opposite views about the *Ain-i-Dahsala*. V. A. Smith calls it ten years' settlement and seems to think that it was based on the average produce of past ten years. He makes no mention of the average of last ten years' prices on the basis of which

the state demand in kind was converted into cash. On the other hand, W. H. Moreland, who devoted twenty years to the study of the fiscal problems of the Mughul age, refers to the average of ten years' cash demands only and makes no mention of ten years' average produce of each kind of land in respect of each crop. Prof. Sri Ram Sharma seems to maintain that the basis of Akbar's settlement till the end of his reign was the schedule of rates established by Sher Shah. Dr. R. P. Tripathi does not clearly specify the two averages, namely, those of produce and of prices. A close study of the subject, however, leads one to the conclusion that Akbar's settlement of 1580 was based on average produce of past ten years and that the state demand in cash was commuted into kind on the basis of the average prices of the last ten years. As has been shown above, for the purpose of ascertaining the average produce, each pargana was treated as unit, while the *dastur* was the unit for determining the prices. It is certain that the settlement was not permanent. Nor was it annual, as Abul Fazl says that Akbar had abandoned Sher Shah's annual settlement which was a source of delay and corruption. The state demand seems to have been revised periodically on the basis of the actual produce of the soil. Although there is no definite record on the point it seems to have been a ten years' settlement. Records of actual produce of every crop raised by each cultivator and also the prices of every kind of crop current in each *dastur* were meticulously maintained even after the establishment of the *Ain-i-Dahsala*.

The system was originally introduced in the *khalsa* territory only. Its scope was extended in 1581-82 to include the *jagir* lands also. Henceforward the *jagirdars* were not permitted to administer their *jagirs* as they liked. Also an attempt was made to reclaim as much of *banjar* land as possible. For this purpose loans were advanced to the cultivators who undertook the labour of bringing such land under cultivation. Collectors were instructed to charge only a nominal revenue for such land and raise it only gradually and assess full revenue only when the *banjar* land had reached the level of *polaj*. Like Sher Shah, Akbar charged one-third of the produce as revenue and that, of course, in cash though collections in kind were permitted in exceptional cases. Being a practical statesman Akbar allowed various modes of assessment, such as, *ghalla bakhshi* or *batai*, *nasq* or *kankut*, and *zabti* or *naqdi* to prevail in

different localities.* The settlement was made direct with the cultivators and was, therefore, like Sher Shah's system, *rayatwari*. Every cultivator was given a *patta* (title deed) and was required to sign a *qabuliyat* (deed of agreement). These documents contained a specification of the plots of land in the possession of a cultivator, their area and the rate of revenue he was required to pay. The state granted remission, if an unexpected calamity befell a village or pargana. The extent of damage was carefully ascertained and a proportionate remission of revenue was ordered by the central government.

The work of revenue collection was entrusted to the government officials in the *parganas* and in districts, notably to the *amil* or amal-guzar. The collectors were assisted by *qanungos*, *patwaris* and village headmen. Besides these, many survey officers and clerks were employed in every pargana to prepare seasonal crop statistics. The latter were paid, while on active duty, daily allowances and ration. Probably a portion of the ration had to be borne by the peasantry. The patwari, who was a servant of the village community, was required to work in co-operation with them. The qanungos in the time of Akbar were state servants and were paid Rs. 20, 30, or 50 a month. For the guidance of amins, shiqdars, amils, bitikchis (karkuns) and other officials connected with survey of land, assessment of its produce and collection of revenue, dastur-ul-amals or codes of 'Customary Practice', peculiar to every pargana, were laid down in writing. These were compiled by qanungos or hereditary revenue officers connected with various parganas. In addition to the dastur-ul-amals, 'full and judicious' instructions were issued for the benefit of officers of the revenue department. These are compared by the historian Smith with Thomson's Directions to Collectors meant for district collectors of the British days in the country. The collectors were given a great deal of discretion. They were required to be friendly to the agriculturists, to advance loans (taqavi) to the needy peasants and to recover them gradually. They were empowered to grant remissions in case of damage done to crops by a natural calamity or other reasons in order to encourage cultivation. They were not to charge revenue except for the area under actual cultivation and to receive payment directly from the cultivators

*For these systems of assessment, see the author's *Sher Shah and His Successors*, pp. 73-74.

and not through intermediaries, such as, headmen who were to be avoided as far as possible. They were to endeavour to recover arrears, but without using undue force. The special instruction given was that they should in every way possible advance the interests of the agriculturists and safeguard their rights. The collectors were required to send to the court a monthly statement of 'the condition of the people, the state of public security, the range of market prices and rents, the condition of the poor, and all other contingencies'. The historian Smith is all praise for the system. "In short," writes he, "the system was an admirable one. The principles were sound and the practical instructions to officials all that could be desired."*

While the land revenue settlement and the principles on which it was based have been highly praised by Anglo-Indian writers, who had been closely connected with the revenue administration of the government of India during the British rule, they have expressed doubt whether the revenue officials in the districts and parganas honestly enforced the imperial regulations. "But a person," observes V.A. Smith, "cannot help feeling considerable scepticism concerning the conformity of practice with precept. Even all the resources of the modern Anglo-Indian government often fail to secure such conformity, and in Akbar's time supervision undoubtedly was far less strict and searching." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 377). Secondly, according to these writers, Akbar's assessment was extremely severe. While one must admit that 'conformity of practice with precept' is difficult to achieve, and that there was a great deal of official corruption in the revenue department, the regulations were probably more faithfully enforced by officials and complied with by the public than under the British rule. The standard of public morality and law-abidingness was without doubt higher among our people in the sixteenth century than in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. People considered it a religious duty to abide by their word and paid off their debt in the second or third generation without even any legal document to enforce payment. Contemporary European observers were struck by the honesty of our ancestors of the 16th and 17th centuries and their habit to obey time-honoured rules and regulations without murmur. We know it for a fact that theft and robberies were far less frequent during the medieval period of our

**Akbar, the Great Mogul*, pp. 376-377.

country's history than under the British rule and this in spite of the latter's much more highly organised police and espionage departments. It may, therefore, be legitimately inferred that the condition in every department of government including the revenue was then not less satisfactory than in our days. In fact popular tradition ascribes new devices of evasion of rules and resort to corruption to the system introduced by the British during whose domination the pernicious practice spread from Bangal to the rest of the country. As regards the severity of the assessment it cannot be denied that Akbar's rates were higher than those obtaining during the ancient period in this country. It could hardly have been otherwise as almost all the Sultans of Delhi with the exception of Firoz Tughluk had charged higher rates and Sher Shah too, famous though he was for his revenue settlement, had fixed one-third of the produce as the state demand and charged jaribana, mahasilana and insurance tax in addition. Akbar did not charge from the peasantry jaribana, mahasilana and insurance tax. As for the European view that the incidence of land tax was higher under Akbar than under the British, it should be noted that he did not recognise the existence of landlords and that the produce of the soil was shared between the government and the cultivator. Under the zamindari system which obtained in most parts of the country during the British rule the zamindars charged 1/2 of the produce from the cultivator, while the sixteenth-century-peasantry had to pay only 1/3. Tradition as well as evidence confirms the opinion that the peasant was better off under Akbar than at any time under the British rule in this country. He has happily come to his own as the result of our agrarian legislation introduced after 15th August, 1947.

Currency.

During the early years of his reign Akbar adopted the currency system of his predecessors and made only nominal modifications, such as the insertion of his name and titles and the place and years of mintage on his coins. His mints were in charge of minor officers called chaudharis and there was little co-ordination between various mints. In 1577 the emperor undertook the reform of the currency and appointed Khwaja Abdus Samad Shirazi, a noted painter and calligraphist, to be the superintendent of the imperial mint at Delhi. All the mints at provincial headquarters which had hitherto been under chaudharis, were placed under more responsible officers who

were required to work under the supervision of Abdus Samad. The Delhi staff under Abdus Samad consisted of a darogha (assistant superintendent), a sarafi (assayer), an amin (assistant to the darogha), a treasurer, a mushrif (accountant), a weighman, a melter of ore, a plate maker and a merchant whose duty was to supply gold, silver and copper. A similar staff must have existed in each of the provincial mints at Lahore, Jaunpur, Ahmedabad, Patna and Tanda (in Bangal).

The mints issued gold, silver and copper coins. The silver coin known as the rupee was round in shape, like its modern successor, and weighed 172. 1/2 grains. Akbar also issued a square rupee called Jalali but it was not so common and popular as the circular rupee. The rupee had its one-half, one fourth, one-eighth, one-sixteenth and one-twentieth pieces. The chief copper coin was the *dam* or *paisa* or *fulus*. It weighed 323·5 grains or almost 21 grams. The ratio between the dam and the rupee was 40 to 1. The lowest copper coin was the jital, and 25 jitals made one paisa. The most common gold coin was the *Ilahi* which was equal to ten rupees in value. The biggest gold coin was the *sahansah* which weighed a little over 101 tolas and must have been used in high business transactions. All the coins of various metals were characterised by 'purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution'. They bore caligraphic inscriptions containing the name and titles of the emperor and the place and year of mintage. Only a few coins had figures inscribed upon them. They were probably intended to be commemorative medals.

Akbar is entitled to high praise for placing the currency on sound scientific foundation, and his coins have been highly spoken of by modern numismatists. "Akbar," writes V. A. Smith, "deserves high credit for the excellence of his extremely varied coinage, as regards purity of metal, fulness of weight and artistic execution. The Mughul coinage, when compared with that of Queen Elizabeth or other contemporary sovereigns in Europe, must be pronounced far superior on the whole. Akbar and his successors seem never to have yielded to the temptation of debasing the coins in either weight or purity. The gold in many of Akbar's coins is believed to be practically pure." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 157).

Law and Justice.

The medieval judicial system was based on Islamic law which

divides the people into two classes—believers and non-believers and does not recognise the latter as citizens of the state. The non-Muslims were suffered to live as *zimmis*, i.e., the people living under contract, and certain disabilities and restrictions were imposed upon them. The king was required to administer the Islamic law in deciding all cases, whether the parties to a suit were Muslims or non-Muslims. But as it was not possible in actual practice to enforce Islamic law on the Hindus, who constituted a vast majority of the population and had a highly developed system of jurisprudence of their own, a compromise was effected, and while criminal cases continued to be decided according to Islamic law in all cases, Hindu law was administered in deciding civil and religious disputes of which the parties were Hindus. As over seventy five percent of the people lived in villages which were in practice autonomous communities, the medieval sultans had little to do with the administration of justice in the rural areas. In the cities they took cognizance of all cases arising out of any cause so far as the Muslim population was concerned; but as for the Hindus, only those causes that came within the scope of criminal law, which was applicable to Hindus and Muslims alike, went to the royal courts.

Although Akbar had rejected the Islamic theory of kingship, he made no fundamental change in the judicial system that he inherited from his predecessors. He, however, made minor changes in the system and reorganised it so as to make it efficient. An important change introduced by him was to restrict the scope of Islamic law and to extend that of general or customary law of the land so as to make it include as many causes as possible. For example, he did not apply the Islamic law of capital punishment for apostacy from Islam or for propagating Hinduism or Christianity. Thirdly, he appointed Hindu judges to decide the cases of Hindus. (*Badayuni*, Vol. II, p. 376).

The king was the highest judge in the empire. According to the immemorial custom of the East, he held court and decided cases in person. Usually, the king's court was the highest court of appeal; but sometimes, he decided initial cases also. Akbar spent sometime every day in listening to complaints from the people and settling their disputes in a summary fashion. On Thursdays he held a formal court of justice to hear and decide major cases, when besides parties

to a suit only high judicial officials and a few nobles noted for their probity and integrity were admitted. Although governors of provinces were empowered to pass the sentence of death on persons guilty of heinous crimes, they generally forwarded such cases to the emperor who inflicted the punishment in extreme cases. The royal orders had to be taken three times before the capital punishment could be executed.

The next judicial authority was the chief qazi, who was also almost invariably the chief sadr and was appointed by the emperor and worked during his pleasure. He was paid his salary in cash and was, besides, given an assignment of land entitled Madad-i-Mash or subsistence allowance. Originally the chief qazi's main qualifications used to be his knowledge of Islamic theology and his narrow sectarian views. But Akbar appointed to this post men of liberal religious outlook and broad sympathies towards all sections of the people. The chief qazi appointed provincial, district and city qazis subject to the approval of the emperor. There were qazis at the headquarters of the parganas, but none in any of the villages, wherein justice was administered by the people's panchayats. There was a separate qazi for the army whose jurisdiction was limited to the army. Sometimes more than one qazi was appointed in a city with defined jurisdiction for each. There were muftis to assist the qazis. Their main duty was to interpret the law and issue a fatwa. When a qazi himself possessed qualifications of issuing fatwa, he naturally did not require the assistance of a mufti. In most important towns there were muhtasibs who examined weights and measures, prevented gambling and drinking and saw that Muslims offered their five daily prayers and kept the Ramzan fasts. Thus he, too, performed judicial duties and enforced social legislation. There were Mir Adils at the capital and provincial headquarters, but not in small towns or parganas. Their duties were similar to those of the qazis.

Besides deciding cases the qazi's duty was to inspect the jails and review the conditions of prisoners. He was empowered to discharge prisoners deserving freedom, but not without a careful examination of their cases. The qazi was also the trustee of waqfs in his jurisdiction. While trying cases, he was instructed to have the evidence recorded by the court clerks, to frame charge-sheet and read it out to the culprit. Witnesses had to be examined and the culprit

was given an opportunity to defend himself. Akbar emphasised the necessity of studying the psychology and physiognomy of culprits and invariably instructed the judges to ascertain the truth by cross-examination.

The organization of the courts and their relations to one another were rather crude. The higher courts, including those of the king and the chief qazi, not only heard appeals but also decided initial cases. It was not necessary that an appeal from a city court should go to the district or provincial court before reaching the court of chief qazi. Sometimes an appeal from the city court lay to the district court, sometimes to the provincial court and at others to the chief qazi's court and even direct to the king's court. Secondly, the same type of cases were decided by a number of officers and it was not specified as to which type or category of cases should be heard by the lower courts. For example, not only the qazi but also the Mir Adil and the governor of a province administered criminal cases involving exactly the same kind of guilt. Civil justice was administered by qazis, Mir Adils and diwans of provinces. Thirdly, there was no separation of executive and judicial functions, and executive officers like the governor and the diwan were entrusted with judicial administration also. Fourthly, the law was not properly codified. The Hindu and Muslim personal laws, that is, those relating to inheritance, marriage, divorce, etc., were given in law books of the two communities, but the customary law of the land was not committed to writing and was applied at the discretion of the judges. Fifthly, according to modern standards the criminal law was very severe and punishments inflicted were out of proportion to the guilt.

Islamic law which was applied in deciding criminal cases, recognises four kinds of punishments: (1) Qisas, *i.e.*, retaliation. It was applied to cases of killing and wounding. (2) Diya or compensation. It, too, was applied to cases of murder or wounding. (3) Hadd or punishment unambiguously prescribed by the Muslim law for offences relating to adultery. (4) Tazir or punishment inflicted by the judge at his discretion. This related to crimes which did not come under the category of Hadd.

The punishments usually inflicted were: imprisonment for

various terms, interment and fines, confiscation of property, flogging, mutilation of limbs, banishment and execution. Capital punishment in most cases was inflicted by the emperor, though provincial governors were authorised to pass the sentence of death for grave offences, such as adultery, treason, sedition and murder. A criminal was usually thrown under the feet of an elephant and trampled to death.

Prisons.

There were two kinds of prisons, one for prisoners of high rank and the other for ordinary criminals. Important nobles and princes guilty of treason and rebellions were imprisoned in the fortresses situated in different parts of the country, the prominent among them being those at Gwalior, Ranthambhor, Rohtas, Bhakkar and Bayana. There were jails at the capital and at the headquarters of the provinces, districts and the pargana. Besides regular prisoners, undertrials were also kept confined in jails. The jails were frequently inspected by high officials of the judicial department who inquired into the condition of the prisoners and released those of them who had suffered enough. Sometimes the emperor paid visits to the prison-houses at the capital, while the governors inspected the provincial jails. Conditions of accommodation, sanitation, health and diet of prisoners in jails were not as satisfactory as they are today.

The Police System.

Akbar's police administration was well organized and efficient. The police may be divided into three categories of urban, district and village police. In all the cities and towns of the empire there were kotwals charged with the duty of maintaining public order and decency. The kotwal's functions have already been enumerated. He was both the head of the city police and committing and trying magistrate. He had to apprehend thieves, robbers and other petty criminals and to punish them. His main duty was to see that the life of the city continued undisturbed. Besides, he had to examine weights and measures, keep an eye on the currency and to enforce Akbar's social legislation. He was held personally responsible for the value of the property stolen in case he failed to discover the thief. He was authorised to inflict on offenders punishment which included torture, mutilation of limbs and flogging. He was, however, not

empowered to inflict the penalty of death. In short, the kotwal's duties were quite comprehensive and his powers wide and despotic. In the district, law and order was maintained by the faujdar who was assisted in this work by the amils and other revenue officers of the parganas. Of course, the faujdar had a kotwal at the district head-quarters to take charge of the police duty of the city. The faujdar's main duties were the policing of roads of the district and suppressing disorders of all kinds. Like the kotwal he was responsible for producing the stolen property, if he failed to trace the thief. He possessed the power of dealing summarily with disturbances, and in normal times he successfully maintained peace and tranquillity. There were more than one *thana* or police station in a pargana. As for the police administration of the villages, Akbar, following the immemorial custom of the country, established the principle of local responsibility. The village headman was required to discover the thieves and robbers within a specified time. In the event of his failure, he had to make good the loss from his own pocket. If a crime occurred on the boundary of more than one village, the headmen of the villages concerned were held responsible for it. Usually the entire village was answerable for every crime and was laid under contribution for making good the loss. There was, however, a chaukidar for every village for normal police work.

The police arrangement under Akbar was fairly efficient and maintained a high standard of public order and tranquillity. It will, however, be idle to imagine that there were no cases of theft, immorality, cheating or disturbances of public peace. There were professional thieves and robbers in the hills and the jungles who descended to the plains to ply thier trade whenever there was lack of vigilance on the part of the local police. Though they are exaggerated in some particulars, the accounts of contemporary European travellers yield a fairly accurate picture of the state of the country in the second half of the sixteenth century. But in view of the law abidingness and high morality of the people and the severity of the penal law the standard of public security was not lower than it is in our time.

Education.

In the sixteenth century no government in any country in the world considered it to be its duty to educate the public. Even England recognised this duty as late as 1870. Akbar was, however, far in

advance of his age and made an attempt to raise the intellectual level of the people. Although he did not establish a net work of schools and colleges all over the country for the benefit of the school-going population and did not allocate a fixed percentage of the state revenue for expenditure on education, yet he encouraged education in diverse ways. There were in his empire primary and secondary schools, and even colleges. Some of them were established and maintained by government, while others depended upon private philanthropy. There was *a maktab* or primary school attached to every mosque where elementary reading, writing, arithmetic, besides the Quran, were taught. In addition to these, there were madarsas which may be called secondary schools or colleges. Akbar established colleges at Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Delhi and other places, and richly endowed them. His example was followed by his courtiers. Quite early in his reign Maham Anaga had built a madarsa near the western gate of *Purana Qila* at Delhi. Khwaja Muin established a college at Delhi. There were many such colleges in all important towns with a sufficiently large Muslim population. In these colleges Islamic theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, logic and astronomy were taught by distinguished teachers, some of whom had received education outside India. There were schools and higher centres of learning for the Hindus in every part of the country. In spite of the destruction wrought by the iconoclastic zeal of the early Turkish invaders, Hindu centres of learning had not completely disappeared. There was a remarkable revival of our ancient learning during the age of Akbar. There was a school in every village and in fact a school attached to every temple where reading, writing and arithmetic and religious books were taught. In higher centres of learning, Hindu theology, sanskrit grammar, philosophy, literature, logic, astronomy, higher mathematics and other sciences were studied. Akbar made an attempt to revise the curriculum and to include certain important subjects in the courses of study meant for grown up boys at schools and colleges. These subjects were science of morals and social behaviour, arithmetic, notations peculiar to arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy and fore-telling, household economy, public administration, medicine, logic, and *tabi*, the *riyazi* and the *illahi* sciences and history. Students of sanskrit were required to study grammar, philology, logic, Vedanta and Patanjali. These were to be studied gradually. The teacher was only to assist the pupils to learn. Students were particularly advised to commit

moral precepts* and sayings to memory, and no one was to neglect "those things which the present time required". Probably colleges were required to specialise in some of the above subjects. It is unlikely that every institution was required to teach all the above subjects. Another reform introduced was to open the madarsas to Hindus. For the first time in medieval India, Hindus and Musalmans received their education in common schools and read the same books. The reform was necessitated by the fact that Akbar had made Persian compulsory for all the state officials and by his desire to create a common nationality.

V.A. Smith erroneously supposes that the reform had no relation to facts and was, therefore, unreal and useless. The system produced remarkable men in every walk of life who contributed to the success of the later days of Akbar and of the reigns of Jahangir and Shah Jahan and were able enough to shed lustre on any age and in any country. This is enough to show that the reform had proved efficacious. Akbar's court was a centre of learning and art. The emperor, his courtiers and officials were liberal patrons of letters. The age consequently witnessed a cultural renaissance of a high order. Works of high literary value were produced in various subjects, particularly on historiography. The Hindi poetry of Akbar's age is unrivalled and has become classical for all time. Such high production would have been impossible without proper educational organization and atmosphere.

The court played a very important part in the emperor's scheme of the propagation of education and culture. Akbar encouraged men of letters and arts to produce standard scientific and literary works on a variety of subjects. Books on religion, philosophy, literature, biography, history, mathematics, astronomy, medicine and other subjects were brought out in large numbers. Poetry was not neglected. Fine arts like architecture, music and painting were also encouraged. Inspired by the laudable ambition of creating a common culture, Akbar established a Translation Department and had outstanding works in Sanskrit, Arabic and Turki rendered into Persian, so as to enable the Hindus and Muslims to know the best in each other's religion and culture. For the above purpose the services of high-ranking scholars in the country were requisitioned.

* Ain 25, vide *Ain-i-Akbari* (Blochmann), Vol. I, pp. 278-79.

Many famous scholars from outside India were also invited to assist the indigenous talent in the above work. Many a Sanskrit treatise, including the Vedas and the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, was rendered into Persian. Arabic works of repute on Muslim theology and arts were also translated into Persian. A school of Indian historiography was founded and a large number of histories were written by eminent historians. Libraries were opened. The royal library in the palace was one of the most wonderful institutions of the kind in the world. It consisted of many thousand books all of which were manuscripts, sumptuously bound and beautifully illustrated. The books were classified according to their subject-matter and the language in which they were written. There were Sanskrit, Persian, Greek, Kashmiri and Arabic works.

Hindi, which was coming into prominence, was patronised. Although the education as planned by Akbar was through the medium of Persian which was the court language and compulsory for state servants, schools attached to temples and private institutions founded and maintained by the Hindus must have imparted knowledge through the medium of Hindi. The measures undertaken by the emperor indicated a desire on his part to raise the moral and intellectual standard of the people. It must, however, be admitted that the scheme was meant mainly for the upper and middle class people.

Religious policy.

It has been shown in a previous chapter that the inquisitive Akbar made a scientific examination of various religions then known in India and that his enquiry led him to the conclusion that there was truth in every religion. He thought it undesirable, therefore, that a comparatively young religion like Islam should be considered to possess the monopoly of Truth and continue as the religion of the State. Hence he abolished Islam as the religion of the State and established in its place, a religion of his own choice known as the Din-i-Ilahi. This new religion, which has been compared to the theosophical order of our time, was an eclectic faith and consisted of good principles culled from every religion. It was based on "reason" and not the "authority of any man". It was Akbar's policy not to impose his religion by force on his subjects. It was, therefore, confined to the court circle and had just a few thousand followers. Even after the establishment of the Din-i-Ilahi, Akbar pursued the

policy of giving full religious toleration to his people. It was but natural for a monarch who believed that there was truth in every religion and that there was the same God everywhere, whether He be worshipped in a church, a mosque, a temple, or a synagogue, to treat all religions alike and to give the followers of every faith complete freedom of conscience and worship. Contrary to the practice which had existed since the advent of Islam in the country, Hindus were permitted to perform public worship and to preach their religion. Those Hindu men, women and children who were forcibly converted to Islam were allowed to go back to their ancestral religion, if any liked. Christians were allowed to build churches and proselytise Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. No kind of disability was imposed on any one on account of his faith. State employment was open to all people irrespective of their race, caste or religious belief. These religious reforms appeared revolutionary in as much as they brought down Islam from its position of dominance which it had enjoyed for centuries, to one of equality with other religions. Its important followers, particularly the *Ulema* who had hitherto presumed to guide the State and shape its religious policy, were greatly disturbed at the change. They levelled charges of irreligiosity and even apostacy against Akbar and instigated the Muslim public to rebel against him. Early in 1580 Mullah Muhammad Yazdi, the Qazi of Jaunpur, issued a *fatwa* to the effect that the emperor had ceased to be a Muslim and rebellion against him was lawful. About this very time Akbar had introduced certain administrative reforms, such as, conversion of jagir lands into *khalsa* (reserve) land and cutting down of allowances of imperial officers. The discontent caused by these reforms persuaded some of the high imperial officers in Bihar and Bangal to join hands with the disaffected and humiliated Muslim theologians and they broke out into a fearful rebellion. The immediate political effect of Akbar's policy of religious toleration was not good and involved the country in a civil war; but the emperor was not to be cowed down into surrender and abandonment of the statesman-like policy of treating all religions alike. He put down the rebellion and *severely chastised* the malcontents. The policy of absolute religious toleration stood the test and continued throughout his reign and with some modification down to the time of Aurangzeb.

Some modern scholars, notably V.A. Smith and Woolseley

Haig, have held that, while Akbar gave complete religious toleration to other faiths, he persecuted Islam. This view is based on the statements of the Jesuit missionaries and of the historian Badayuni. The former, in their anxiety to show to their superiors in Goa and Lisbon the success of their mission and that the emperor was well on the way to embrace Christianity, sent highly exaggerated and even false reports to them. They informed the credulous Christians of Europe that he had not only abandoned Islam but was persecuting it. Badayuni was a bigoted mullah in whose eyes justice and fairness shown to other religions was tantamount to injustice to and persecution of Islam. As has been mentioned, the very fact that Islam had ceased to be the state religion gave moral offence to its orthodox followers. They denounced as persecution of Islam such unexceptionable measures as the giving of equal privileges to every faith for the propagation of its principles and the allowing of freedom to the converts to revert to their original religions, if they liked. Badayuni gives a long list of the so-called measures of persecution. They are :—

(1) Akbar made it obligatory to wear silk dresses and ornaments at prayer time.
(2) He forbade Islamic prayers.
(3) He stopped the call to prayer in the Assembly Hall.
(4) He prohibited Muslim fasts.
(5) Pilgrimage to Mecca was prohibited.
(6) Muslim festivals were discontinued.
(7) No one was allowed to give the name of Muhammad and Ahmad to his children.
(8) Mosques were plundered and converted into stables.
(9) Shaving of beards was allowed.
(10) Flesh of wild boars, pigs and tigers was permitted.
(11) Study of Arabic was discouraged.
(12) Those who killed cows and other animals on prohibited days were punished, sometimes with capital punishment.

A critical examination of the charges makes it clear that most of them were groundless. If Akbar had forbidden Islamic prayers, it was superfluous to order silk dresses and ornaments to be put on at the prayer time. We know from Badayuni's own book and from the writings of the Jesuit missionaries that Muslim call to prayer

and five daily prayers were common enough throughout Akbar's reign. It is ridiculous to imagine that the masses should have been ordered not to keep the fast of Ramzan. Similarly, pilgrimage to Mecca continued to be undertaken as before. We know it from several sources, including the Jesuit missionaries, that as late as 1585 many men and women were permitted to proceed to Mecca. The celebration of Muslim festivals and the naming of Muhammad and Ahmad were common-place things throughout Akbar's reign, as is clear from the statement of many a contemporary writers. There is no concrete instance to show that mosques were plundered or converted into stables. Unlike Hindu temples, mosques possess no articles of value and as such, they are not worth plundering. It may be that at the time of war a mosque might have been utilised for military purposes. In view of our knowledge that hundreds of mosques remained and were utilized as places of worship, it seems too much to believe that any general order for their conversion into stables could have been given. We know from many paintings of the later days of Akbar's reign that the emperor's nobles and courtiers continued to grow beards. If Akbar shaved his beard and his example was followed by some of his courtiers, it should not be taken to be an instance of the persecution of Islam. Similarly, flesh of boars was not forced on any one. Probably those who ate it were not hated or punished. Akbar emphasised the study of Persian and patronised Sanskrit and Hindi. No order was issued banning Arabic. The fanatics like Badayuni thought that the encouragement of Sanskrit amounted to a ban on Arabic. It is, thus, clear that Akbar made no attempt to persecute the religion of his ancestors. What he really did was to bring it down to the level of other religions and to look upon Muhammad as a prophet and not the Prophet so far as he personally was concerned.

Public Services.

The Mughul imperial service, which conducted the administration so efficiently and made Akbar's reign brilliant, cannot be called national. It was mostly foreign in personnel and consisted of Turks, Mongols, Uzbegs, Persians, Arabs and Afghans, with a little sprinkling of Indian Muhammadans and Hindus. According to Blochmann, 70 percent of Akbar's senior officials were foreigners, who had either come from Central Asia for service or had settled in this country for one or two generations. Most of them had accom-

panied Babur and Humayun to our land and attached themselves to the ruling family. Akbar had thrown open the higher services to the Hindus; but the number of Hindus holding high civil and military posts was comparatively very small. Nor was the proportion of Indian Muhammadans in any way high. Among the Hindus who held high posts Rajputs predominated. Inspite of Akbar's policy of "India for the Indians" the Mughul imperial service remained a heterogeneous institution, mainly foreign in personnel, till the end of his reign.

Admission to the service was based on merit and fitness. Race, caste and creed played little part in the recruitment of its members. Sometimes political considerations obliged the emperor to appoint certain men to high posts in the imperial service. But even these men were not promoted to the higher rank unless they had shown themselves competent by approved service and loyalty. All the members of the imperial service were given the designation of mansabdars and their rank, position and emoluments were determined by the mansabs which they held. Promotion depended upon approved service and not on seniority or pay. The emperor reserved to himself the right of promoting or degrading the highest officers including the ministers at will. Even the prime-minister could be degraded to the post of governor or even to a lesser rank. Raja Todar Mal, after having served as prime-minister, was, subsequently, transferred to the post of a governor. Such examples were by no means rare. It was not necessary that an officer holding a small post should pass through various stages before his appointment to the highest post in a particular branch of service. In all cases continuance in a high post or promotion was not possible without approved service and unflinching loyalty.

The imperial service was organised on bureaucratic principles. It was military in organisation and outlook. As has been shown in connection with an account of the army, every official was the holder of a mansab or official appointment of rank and profit. He was required to maintain a contingent of troops and auxiliaries and furnish the same for the service of the State whenever called upon to do so. The members of the service, called "mansabdars", were classified into 33 grades which ranged from the mansab of 10 to that of 10,000.

Thus the imperial service was organised on definite military lines and its members were expected to perform military duties in addition to their main work, administrative or judicial. Like all bureaucracies, it was highly efficient and loyal.

There was little specialisation of appointments. Services were not clearly demarcated as administrative, revenue or judicial. In fact, there was no distinction between civil and military services even. Any officer was at any time liable to be transferred to an altogether new form of employment. For example, Raja Todar Mal, who was essentially a financier of the highest ability, was transferred more than once to act as a governor and even as a military commander. Abul Fazl, the eminent scholar and historian, was sent on a diplomatic mission and also had to conduct a military expedition in the Deccan. Raja Birbal, who was no more than a court wit, was ordered to lead an expedition against the tribal Pathans. There was no separate educational or medical service, though teachers and physicians were employed as imperial servants.

Generally speaking, the officials were divided into two, broad divisions, namely (1) those who served the emperor at court, and (2) the others who held definite appointments, whether at the capital or in the provinces. The names of both kinds of officers were recorded in separate registers and the officers who were required to attend at court were expected to keep themselves in readiness to carry out any orders that the emperor might give. They had their own troops which, too, were kept ready for service. The officials whose names were recorded in another register held various kinds of appointments, such as, governorship or other positions in the provinces and districts, or posts in the imperial secretariat or household department.

The officials were either paid by grant of jagirs or in cash from the royal treasury. Akbar preferred the latter mode of payment; but as payment by grant of jagirs had come down from the past, he could not abolish the system altogether. But the number of officers who were paid their salaries by assignment of land was, however, very small towards the end of his reign. The salaries and allowances of the officials were enormous. A first grade mansabdar of five thousand was paid Rs. 30,000 a month, a second grade mansabdar of the same class received Rs. 29,000 a month, and a third grade official of that

rank got Rs. 28,000 a month. The officials were, howeves, required to pay out of their salaries the cost of their military establishments. If the cost of the establishment were deducted from their salaries, the emoluments of a mansabdar of five thousand would, on a rough estimate, be Rs. 18,000, that of one thousand Rs. 5,000, and that of 500, Rs. 1,000 a month. In Akbar's time the payments were made for all the twelve months of the year.

The Mughul public service, though well-organised, suffered from certain drawbacks. In the first place, there were no regular rules of appointment, promotion or dismissal. Secondly, fixity of tenure was not guaranteed. This led to intrigues and sometimes to neglect of duty. It was the emperor's pleasure to appoint or promote any one he liked. Akbar, who possessed the never failing quality of judging human character at sight, almost invariably chose right kind of officers and promoted only those who deserved it. But under his successors, who were less gifted rulers the imperial service began to deteriorate. Thirdly, the cost of maintaining the fixed quota of troops and auxiliaries was very heavy. On account of the tradition of a luxuriously high standard of living and their own position in life, imperial officials of the upper grades were required to be extravagant and there was, therefore, no incentive to thrift. The average officer spent large sums on luxuries, banquets and presents, and was obliged to exploit poor people.

In spite of these drawbacks the Mughul imperial service under Akbar was one of the most highly organised, talented, loyal and efficient services then known to the world. It carried out the imperial policy expeditiously and made Akbar's reign successful and brilliant.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The country and the people.

India of the time of Akbar was very much like that of today. There were, of course, no railways nor the canal systems of the Panjab and the modern Uttar Pradesh. River-Valley projects and industrial and technological developments of independent India were unthinkable in the medieval age. There were no metalled roads. The various parts of the country and most of the important towns were connected by *kachcha* roads, shaded by trees on either side of them, and

clearly demarcated by *sarais* meant for merchants and travellers to spend the night in security. Navigable rivers, such as the Indus, the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Ghaghara and the rivers of Bangal were frequently used for traffic and transport of troops and goods. There were more forests in the time of Akbar than now. This was particularly the case in the districts of Gorakhpur, Gonda, Lakhimpur Kheri and Bijnaur in the modern Uttar Pradesh and in several parts of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Owing to the presence of forests, wild animals were seen even in some parts of the Gangetic plains. Elephants were common in the country, south of the Ganga and the Yamuna. Lions and tigers could be shot in some parts of Malwa, and rhinoceroses and tigers were sometimes seen in the forests of the Gangetic plain. Akbar had an extensive hunting ground near Agra where various kinds of wild games were bagged. The presence of large forests and gardens was responsible for greater rainfall and productivity. Apart from these the general aspect of the country did not materially differ from that of today. The countryside was dotted with numerous villages close to one another and full of people. The modern towns of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kanpur and Karachi had not come into existence. Ancient capitals like Kanauj and Vijayanagar were in a state of decay. The most flourishing cities in Akbar's time were Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Delhi, Allahabad, Banaras, Lucknow, Lahore, Multan, Ujjain, Ahamdabad, Ajmer, Patna, Rajmahal and Dacca. All these were very populous and prosperous. Large gardens were found in all parts of the country, particularly in the vicinity of big towns. Not only the countryside but also the towns, as Monserrate says, looked beautiful from a distance.

The country was thickly populated with extensive patches of forests and uninhabited land interspersed here and there; but the density of population was much less than it is today. The population was not homogeneous. Hindus, of course, formed the great majority and were divided into castes. The upper classes of them belonged mostly to the Rajput, Brahman, Kayasth and Vaish castes and they did not interdine and intermarry among themselves and the caste system was much more rigorous than in our time. Rajputs, as a rule, were military men and their tribal leaders were high-ranking mansabdars in the imperial service. The Brahmans were engaged in priestly profession or in that of teaching, while the Vaish formed the mercantile community. Kayasths were engaged largely as clerks, secretaries and revenue offi-

cers. Some of the Rajputs, belonging to the lower classes, also seemed to have been fond of highway robbery. The Muhammadans were sharply divided into two sections, namely (1) those who had come for employment in the Mughul service or for trade and commerce from Arabia, Persia and other countries, and (2) those who were converts from the indigenous Hindu population or descendants of early converts. The number of the latter class was naturally fairly large. The foreign Muhammadan traders from Arabia and Persia had formed their settlements at the sea-ports. Those who had come for service were found mostly in northern India and a smaller number at the courts of Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Golkunda. Foreign Muslims predominated at Akbar's court. Besides the Arabs, the Persians, the Turks, the Mongols and the Uzbegs, there were some Abyssinians and Armenians. As the country was open to foreign adventurers and there was no check on immigration, men of many nationalities from Europe and Asia, such as, the Portuguese, the English, the Chinese, the Japanese, the Turks and the Jewish people were found in the country. The Jews, like the Armenians, formed a small and powerful section of the trading community. Parsis, though small in number, wielded some influence at Akbar's court. They had not yet taken to commerce and were engaged in agriculture or carpentry. They were settled in Nawsari and other districts in Gujarat. As regards the Europeans, only the Portuguese held an important position, as they were masters of Goa and some other places on our western coast. They also possessed trading stations at the mouths of the Indus and the Ganga.

Our Cities.

We have fairly sufficient material for forming a concrete picture of the economic institutions and the condition of the people during the reign of Akbar. The *Ain-i-Akbari*, supplemented by some other works in Persian and the accounts of contemporary European travellers, merchants and writers throw a flood of light on the economic condition of the country. There were many big and prosperous cities in the empire. The most important of these were Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Ajmer, Lahore, Multan, Ujjain, Burhanpur, Ahamdabad, Banaras, Allahabad, Patna, Raj Mahal, Burdwan, Hugli, Dacca and Chatgaon. European travellers were struck by the size, wealth and prosperity of our cities. "Agra and Fatehpore," writes Fitch in 1585, "are two very great cities, either of them much greater than London and very populous. Between Agra and Fatehpore are 22

miles, and all the way is a market of victuals and other things as full as though a man were still in a town, and so many people as if a man were in a market." According to Monserrate, Lahore was one of the largest cities in the world and second to none in Europe or in Asia. Delhi was even larger than Lahore. Jaunpur and Allahabad were prosperous towns, and Banaras was one of the most ancient, populous and prosperous cities in the world. Burhanpur in Khandesh was very large and wealthy. Abul Fazl describes Ahamdabad as "a noble city in a high state of prosperity" which for the pleasantness of its climate and its display of the choicest productions of the whole globe is almost unrivalled. Patna in Bihar was the largest city of that province. In Bangal the most important towns were Raj Mahal, Burdwan, Hugli, Dacca and Chatgaon. It is clear from the testimony of contemporary foreign travellers that the urban population in the time of Akbar was well-to-do.

Communications.

Important towns in the country were connected by roads which were metalled but kept in good condition except during the rainy season. The roads had rows of trees on either side of them and there were walled *sarais* for travellers and merchants. Our rivers, many of which were navigable throughout the year, were used for transport of goods and traffic. Some of the rivers had bridges at important places. Munim Khan built a bridge on the Gomati at Jaunpur in the early days of Akbar's reign. There was, thus, no want of communications and roads and rivers were used for traffic throughout the year. As in the time of Sher Shah, royal *dak* was carried by *harkaras* who were posted at every *sarai*. News travelled at the rate of 70 to 80 miles a day.

Agricultural and other products.

Agriculture provided the means of livelihood to a vast majority of the people. It was carried on in much the same manner as to-day. Besides the usual crops, such as wheat, barley, gram, peas and oilseeds, sugarcane, indigo and poppy were cultivated in many parts of the country. There was localisation of crops, as in our own days. Sugarcane was cultivated in many parts of the modern Uttar Pradesh, Bangal and Bihar. Indigo crop was raised in many places in northern India and particularly in Central India. Cotton was also grown in most places. Agricultural implements and tools were the same as

now. Artificial irrigation, however, was absent in the days of Akbar. Nevertheless, the country was self-sufficient in agricultural products and corn had not to be imported from outside even in times of scarcity. Among the non-agricultural products, fisheries, minerals, salt, opium and liquor were most important. Fish was caught in large quantities and was abundantly cheap. Iron was produced in many parts of the country and was extensively used for making tools, implements, arms, etc. There were copper mines in Rajasthan and Central India which produced large quantities of the metal in Akbar's time. Salt came from Sambhar lake and from the hills of the Panjab. It was also manufactured at many places from sea-water. Opium was extensively cultivated in Malwa and Bihar, and, in spite of Akbar's prohibitory orders, liquor was produced from *tadi* and *mahua* at many places. Saltpetre was also manufactured, as it was much in demand for munition.

Industries and Crafts.

The most important industry was the cultivation of cotton and manufacture of cotton cloth. Cotton industry was known to every village. There were everywhere cotton corders and weavers; but the principal centres of cotton manufacture were Jaunpur, Banaras, Patna, Burhanpur, Lucknow, Khairabad and Akbarpur, and many other places in the modern Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bangal and Orissa. In fact, the entire country was familiar with this industry and the tract from Orissa to the eastern frontier and Bangal "looked like a big cotton factory". Dacca was particularly reputed for its delicate cotton fabrics. It produced large quantities of muslin, the finest cloth of cotton then known to our people. The subsidiary dyeing industry flourished side by side with the cotton industry. Edward Terry was struck with the beautiful and fast dyes produced in the country. He says that cloths were dyed or printed with "a variety of well-shaped and well-coloured flowers or figures which are so fixed on the cloth that no water can wash them out". Silk weaving industry was also in a flourishing condition. Akbar's patronage gave impetus to this industry. Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore were important centres of silk-weaving and in many towns of Gujarat and Bangal large quantities of silk fabrics were produced. Next in importance were the shawl and carpet weaving industries. Kashmir was the main centre of these industries. Shawls and carpets were produced also at Lahore and Agra and some other towns. Manufacture of woollen goods was done in some places where

blankets and other woollen articles were produced; but this industry was not so common as those of silk and cotton. The textile industry provided occupation to quite a vast portion of our population next in number only to those who depended upon agriculture. Besides, there were many other small industries, such as the manufacture of wooden bed steads, chests, boxes, stools and almirahs; of leather goods; of pottery; of paper and of bricks. Terry says that he saw "many curious boxes, trunks, stand-dishes (pen cases), carpets with excellent manufactures in the markets". Artistically designed and ornamented desks, writing cases and ivory works were also produced. Manufacture of arms, swords, arrows, bows, spears, javelins, guns and muskets was a flourishing industry, as was that of saltpetre, which was used in the making of gunpowder. These industries were financed mostly by rich merchants, who also made arrangements for their transport to foreign lands. The State, no doubt, encouraged the manufacture of goods of various kinds on a large scale, and there were attached to the court many workshops or *karkhanas* in which many hundreds of men were employed.

Foreign Trade.

During the reign of Akbar, our country had an active and considerable foreign trade with many countries of Asia and Europe. Akbar took keen interest in the foreign sea-borne trade and did all that was possible in that age to foster the economic prosperity of the country. The chief exports were textiles, specially various kinds of cotton fabrics, pepper, indigo, opium and various kinds of drugs and miscellaneous goods. The chief imports from foreign countries were bullion, horses, metals, silk, ivory, coral, amber, precious stones, silk cloth, velvet, brocade, broad cloth, perfumes, drugs China goods, especially porcelain, African slaves and European wines. Chinese porcelain found much favour with Akbar and his Muslim courtiers and was, therefore, much in demand. Glass vessels were also imported from abroad, probably from Venice. Among the exports, textiles were the most important. Besides providing the need of the people in the land, the country supplied cotton cloth of many varieties to Africa, Arabia, Egypt, Burma, Malacca, the Straits and several other countries of Asia. Our cotton goods were also much in demand in European countries, such as Italy, France, England and Germany. The principal outlets for foreign sea-borne trade were Cambay, Surat and Broach in Gujarat, Lahori Bandar in Sindh, Bassein, Chaul, Dabul

(modern Bhabol) in the Ratnagiri district, Goa and Bhatkal, Calicut and Cochin in Malabar and Negapatam, Masulipatam and some other ports on the east coast. In Bangal, the most important ports were Satgaon, Sripur, Chatgaon and Sonargaon. Besides these sea-routes, there were two main land-routes for export trade. They lay from Lahore to Kabul and beyond, and from Multan to Kandhar and beyond. But the sea-routes, which were comparatively secure and advantageous, were more frequently used than the land-routes. The State charged low customs duties. At Surat 3½ percent. duty was charged on all exports and imports of goods and 2 percent. on gold and silver. It had become a fixed rule with the government not to permit export of precious metals. No merchant was allowed to export gold or silver. On the other hand, large quantities of gold and silver and other precious metals were imported from abroad every year. The balance of trade invariably was in our favour.

Prices.

Things of daily use, such as corn, vegetables, fruits, ghee, milk, butter, oil, fish, mutton and articles of clothing and other commodities of common use were very cheap. Edward Terry says that "plenty of all provisions" was "very great throughout the whole monarchy," "everyone there may eat bread without scarceness." The normal rate of wheat was 12 maunds a rupee. Barley sold 8 maunds, best rice 10 maunds, mung 18 maunds, mash 16 maunds and salt 16 maunds. A sheep could be had for a rupee and a half or even less than that. Muttonsold 17 seers a rupee and milk 44 seers a rupee. Daily wages of workers were also low. An unskilled labourer was paid 2 dams, that is, 1/20 of a rupee per day; a carpenter got 7 dams, that is, 7/40 of a rupee and other skilled workmen got 7 dams a day. The effect of all-round cheapness and low prices was that the common man could get his means of subsistence without difficulty. The historian Smith is of opinion that "the higher landless labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahangir probably had more to eat than he has now". Moreland, on the other hand, thinks that "speaking generally, the masses lived on the same economic plane as now". The truth seems to be that although the income of the common man during Akbar's time was not high, he did not suffer from starvation, nor did he feel the pinch of want of corn and other necessities of life which were plentiful and cheap. Moreover, common people had fewer needs than their successors of to-day.

Economic System.

An important factor in the economic system during the reign of Akbar and, in fact, throughout the Mughul period was a wide gulf separating producers from consumers. The producers consisted of agriculturists, industrial workers and traders. The consuming classes were the nobles and the officers of the civil and military services, the professional and religious classes, servants and slaves, and beggars. There was superfluity of officers and domestic servants. The State and the private house-holds could have easily done with a lesser number of officials and servants. It was the fashion with rich people to be surrounded by a crowd of retainers and menial servants. Similarly, there was a large number of religious mendicants and beggars who performed no useful function, and, consequently, a large portion of the State income was wasted on superfluous services, the cost of which had to be borne by the producing classes. The nobles and officers were paid very high salaries and they spent money lavishly on articles of luxury and display. They were fond of sumptuous dishes, costly dresses, precious jewellery, elephants and horses. They spent extravagantly on marriages of their sons and daughters, on buildings, mausoleums and mosques, and on curious articles purchased from foreign countries. Their extravagant living led most of them into debt, and compelled them to extort money from the peasantry. The middle class people, consisting of professional classes and ordinary state employees, were fairly well off. The upper and middle class merchants were also economically prosperous, specially those who had the good luck to attach themselves to the imperial court or to some prominent nobles or officials. It seems that skilled workmen earned sufficient to lead a decent life, but the condition of unskilled workers, peons and low shopkeepers was not good. The workmen and peons were paid low wages and had to put up with ill-treatment and even oppression. Thus, the lower class people were poor and denied even ordinary comforts. They resided in mud houses, as now, and had very few belongings.

Famines.

In a country where crops depend upon rainfall, the failure of seasonal rains is almost invariably followed by a famine. North-western India suffered from a severe famine in 1555-56, that is, the first year of Akbar's reign. It was accompanied with a pestilence which took a heavy toll of human life. For about six months during

1573-74, Gujarat suffered from a famine and many of the inhabitants of the province had to migrate to other parts of the country. During 1595-96 scarcity of rainfall brought about a famine in Kashmir and the Punjab where many people died of starvation. Bangal was visited by famine in 1575. As usual, famines were followed by epidemics, causing a fearful destruction of human life.

We learn from Abul Fazl that it was Akbar's policy to make arrangements for relieving the distress of the famine-stricken people. We know definitely that in 1595 he appointed Shaikh Farid as a special officer to supervise relief measures. We have no material to form a concrete picture of the details of the relief work undertaken by Akbar's government.

Games and Sports.

Akbar had inherited from his ancestors a love of hunting which had become his regular pastime. His nobles and courtiers followed his example. Hawking was another hobby of Akbar. The game of polo was a favourite game of upper class people during the 16th century. Animal combates were arranged periodically by the court, and people gathered to witness the fight of elephants, tigers and wild boars. Wrestling and pigeon-flying were quite common, and so was boxing. Abul Fazl gives a list of famous athletes of Akbar's time and states that two well-matched wrestlers used to contend every day before the emperor, who rewarded them after the match. Akbar learnt pigeon-flying from one of his tutors and continued to take interest in this pastime until his old age. Pigeon-flying remained popular throughout the Mughul period and it is so even now in some important cities like Agra and Lucknow. Kite-flying was as popular as it is today.

Indoor games were favourites of upper class people during the age of Akbar. The emperor himself exhibited keenness at chess or *shatranj* which seems to have come down to us from ancient days in our country. From India it spread to Arabia, Persia and China. The game was considered lawful even by orthodox Muslims and hence was equally common in well-to-do Hindu and Muslim homes. Another indoor game, which was as popular as chess, was *chaupar* or backgammon. Next in popularity was the game of *phansa*, and the fourth was *pachisi*, which was played with *cowries*. These games, namely

chaupar, *phansa* and *pachisi* were played on a cloth board in the form of a cross, each of four arms of the cross being divided into twenty-four squares in three rows of eight each. The squares were indicated by patches of coloured cloth. Akbar was particularly fond of *chandal-mandal* and *pachisi*. The figures of these games can even now be seen in the Agra Fort. Playing cards were also common.

Fairs and Festivals.

Our people of the medieval age took great delight in entertainments, amusements, fairs and festivals. Akbar's court was a centre of national festivals, such as Rakshabandhan, Dasehra, Diwali and Vasant. These Hindu festivals had been adopted by the Mughul court and were celebrated with great display. The Persian festival of Nauroz was also celebrated by the court under Akbar for a week or more every year. The birthdays of the emperor and crown princes, the anniversaries of the emperor's accession according to solar and lunar calculations were observed on such a grand scale as to give the impression of a festival. Hindus were very fond of going on pilgrimage to their holy places, which were found in all parts of the country. The sacred places where periodical fairs were held and which were thronged by thousands of people, were Hardwar, Thaneshwar, Mathura, Ayodhya, Prayag, Gaya, Ujjain, Puri, Conjevaram and Rameshwaram. Akbar had abolished the "pilgrim's tax" on the Hindus as early as 1563, which must have given great impetus to Hindu pilgrimage. Muslims undertook pilgrimage to Ajmer and Mecca. The State afforded them every facility. A large number of Indian-built ships were kept on the west coast for carrying pilgrims to the Red Sea. In 1575, Akbar issued a general order that whoever wished to go on pilgrimage to Mecca might charge his expenses to the public treasury. A large number of Muslims availed themselves of this offer. Akbar maintained friendly relations with the Portuguese who had established their supremacy on the Sea. The Portuguese sometimes charged not only licence fee for the ships but also compelled the pilgrims to pay them huge bribes.

Some of the common recreations were shows and performances, such as, *Kathputli*, juggler's performances, monkey-dances, acrobat's antics and Ram Lila. Marriages, and other *sanskars* also afforded recreation and amusement to the common people. Nautch and music were very common in all parts of the country.

Intemperance was a common evil from which the upper classes of our society suffered during the medieval age. Akbar, like his ancestors, used to drink, but perhaps sparingly. He seems to have liked *tadi* or country-made liquor and not European wine. All his sons were confirmed drunkards. Two of them died of excessive drinking and the third one, Jahangir, escaped his brothers' fate on account of his robust constitution. In spite of the Quranic prohibition, Muslim courtiers were generally addicted to liquor. Rajputs, too, were fond of wine and opium. Some of the other castes in royal employment seemed to have familiarity with wine, but our common people were free from this evil. Both on account of tradition and religious considerations the masses were temperate and abstemious.

Literature and Art.

Persian Literature—The reign of Akbar was a period of renaissance in Medieval Indian history. His tolerant and benevolent policy and his patronage of learning, coupled with internal peace and prosperity and freedom from foreign danger, made possible the conditions in which letters and art flourish. It is no surprise, therefore, that volumes of literature were produced by scholars of outstanding ability. Persian literature may be classified under two heads, namely, original composition and translations. Under the first category letters and poetry occupied a prominent place. It was a fashion with writers in that age to leave behind collections of letters which were considered to be models of literary style. Abul Fazl's letters known as *Insha-i-Abul-Fazl* have been printed by the Nawal Kishore Press, Lucknow. They were regarded as models of epistolary composition and were imitated by scholars throughout the Mughul period. Even the puritan emperor, Aurangzeb, who condemned Abul-Fazl as a heretic, commended the latter's style to his sons. Many other collections from the pen of other distinguished essayists have come down to us and some of them are likely to yield material for a cultural history of the period. Persian poetry occupied the next place. In fact, poetry was, in medieval age, the most popular vehicle of literary expression and Muslims, both Indian and foreign, were particularly fond of it. It served the Persians and the Mughuls as an easy vehicle to give expression to their natural love of beauty. There were many in Akbar's days who practised it as a regular profession, while others resorted to it as a means of relaxation, or in pursuit of culture. Owing to the patronage extended to poetry,

thousands of poets, both Indian and foreigners, flocked to Akbar's court. Abul Fazl tells us "Many among them have completed a *diwan* or have written a *masnavi*." The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the name of fifty-nine topmost Persian poets who had been presented to Akbar and patronised by him. There were fifteen others who, too, were supposed to belong to the first category, but had not been presented; they had sent their poems to Akbar from various places in Persia. Abul Fazl gives extracts from the poetic compositions of the fifty-nine best poets of Persian. The most important of them was his own elder brother Abul Faizi. Critics considered Faizi to have been the most prominent Indian poet of Persian since the days of Amir Khusrav. He is supposed to rank with Amir Khusrav and Amir Hassan Dehlvi, and was, thus, one of the three Indian poets of Persian whose works were read outside India. Critics hold divergent views about the value of the verse composed by Faizi and other poets at the court of Akbar. According to the historian Smith, they had "no better claims to that title (poet) than the composer of acrostics for a magazine has. They exercised their perverse ingenuity in torturing words into all sorts of shapes, omitting words with dotted letters, constructing cunningly devised chronograms and such like trivialities. Exercises of the kind, whatever their technical merits may be, certainly are not poetry." (*Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 416). Indian scholars, however, are appreciative of the literary productions of the age. Although one cannot entirely subscribe to the views held by Smith, there is no doubt that the poets of the period writing in Persian paid more attention to language than to thought, and their familiar theme in most cases was love.

Many an author of outstanding merit produced a commentary on the *Quran*. Some of these commentaries possess independent literary value. The most important achievement of the age was translation into Persian of first-rate works of Sanskrit, Arabic, Turki and Greek. As has been mentioned in a previous chapter, Akbar in order to bring about a fusion of the Hindu and Muslim cultures and in order to provide a common literature to the intelligentsia of the land, established at his court a translation department in which were employed high-ranking scholars of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. The department functioned under his personal supervision. Under its auspices a part of *Zich-i-Jadid-e-Mirzai* was translated into Persian by Amir Fatehullah Shirazi. The *Tajak*, a well-known work of

Astronomy, and the *Tuzuk-i-Baburi* or, the memoirs of Babur, were translated into Persian. The latter work was translated by Mirza Abdur Rahim Khan Khana. The *Majmul-Buldan*, an excellent work on towns and countries was translated from Arabic into Persian by Mullah Ahmad, Qasim Beg, Shaikh Munnavvar and others. Abul Fazl translated into Persian many outstanding Sanskrit works, such as the *Kishan Joshi*, the *Ganga Dhar*, the *Mahesh*, the *Mahanand* and others. The *Mahabharata* was rendered into Persian by Naqib Khan, Abdul Qadir Badayuni and Shaikh Sultan of Thaneshwar and was named *Razmnama*, the book of wars. The same scholars also translated the *Ramayana*, and Haji Ibrahim Sirhindi translated *Atharva Veda*. The *Lilawati*, a Sanskrit treatise on Mathematics, was rendered into Persian by Faizi, and *Rajatarangini*, a Sanskrit history of Kashmir, was translated by Mulla Shah Muhammad of Shahabad. The *Harivansh Purana* was translated by Maulana Sheri and Abul Fazl himself translated the *Panch Tantra* (*Anwar-i-Sahili*) and Faizi the story of *Nal-Damyanti* into Persian. (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, pp. 104-106).

Among original compositions in Persian historical literature easily occupied the first place. Akbar's inordinate love of history and patronage of historians became responsible for the production of many chronicles describing not only the events of the reign, but also the past history of the country. Among the notable works may be mentioned Abul Fazl's *Akbar-Nama* and the *Ain-i-Akbari*, Nizam-ud-Din Ahmad's *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, Gulbadan Begam's *Humayun-Nama*, and Jauhar's *Tazkirat-ul-Waqayat*. Abbas Sarwani produced the *Tahfa-i-Akbar Shahi* alias *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*. Akbar ordered the compilation of the history of 1,000 years of Islam, and Naqib Khan, Mullah Muhammad of Thatta and Jafar Beg were commissioned to write out the work. The book, with an introduction by Abul Fazl, was brought out in time and became known as the *Tarikh-i-Alfi*. Some of the other histories written during the period were Abul Qadir Badayuni's *Muntakhab-ul-Tawarikh*, Ahmad Yadgar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Afaghana*, Bayazid Sultan's *Tarikh-i-Humayun*, Nurul-Haq's *Zubdat-ul-Tawarikh*, and Azad Beg's *Waqayat*, and *Akbar Nama* of Shaikh Illahdad Faizi Sarhindi.

Hindi Poetry.

The reign of Akbar was the golden age of Hindi poetry. The influence exercised by his glorious and victorious reign, his well-known

preference for Hindu thought and mode of life, together with his policy of complete religious toleration and recognition of merit, combined with peace, both internal and external, engendered a bracing atmosphere for the development of thought and literature. The result was that many first-rate Hindi poets produced remarkable poetical works which have become classics. The most notable luminaries of Hindi were Tulsi Das, Sur Das, Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, Ras Khan and Birbal. By universal consent of critics the first place among the poets of the age, both Hindi and Persian, belongs to Tulsi Das who, however, was not known to Akbar personally. He spent most part of his life at Banaras, and produced twenty-five works of high standard, the most well-known among them being the heroic poem, *Ramcharitmanas*, popularly known as the *Ramayana*. The epic is divided into seven books, describing the life of Shri Ram Chandra, the king of Ayodhya, who is looked upon by the Hindus as an incarnation of God. Tulsi's next important work is *Vinaya Patrika* which consists of hymns or songs of prayers. The historian Smith and Sir George Grierson (a first-rate authority on the subject) are of the opinion that the *Ramayana* is a masterpiece and that Tulsi Das was a great genius. According to them Tulsi Das's style varies with the subject and his characters, each of whom has a well-defined personality, live and move with all the dignity of a heroic age. Sir George Grierson goes further and says that "Tulsi Das is the most important figure in the whole of Indian Literature", that he used similes drawn from nature herself and that his description is most natural. The next most important Hindi poet was Sur Das who was even more prolific a writer than Tulsi Das. He is particularly known as the author of *Sur Sagar* and of many songs. No other poet of Hindi, before or after him, had a greater knowledge of child psychology than Sur Das. Some critics looked upon him as even greater than Tulsi Das. He was attached to Akbar's court and was popularly known as the "blind bard of Agra". His father, Ram Das, was also a court poet of Akbar.[1] Many other Hindi poets graced Akbar's court. His reign was also marked by the advent of Muslim poets in the field of Hindi literature and poetry. In fact, some Muslim poets interpreted Indian culture so successfully that if their names were to be omitted from their composition, it would be indistinguish-

[1] Some modern scholars of Hindi are of the opinion that this Sur Das was not the author of *Sur Sagar*.

able from that of the Hindu scholars and poets. In this respect the name of Abdur Rahim Khan Khana stands pre-eminent. Besides being a master of Persian, Arabic and Turki, he was also a first-rate scholar of Sanskrit and a poet of Hindi and Rajasthani. Several hundred verses from his pen have come down to us and are given an honoured place in our poetical selections. In fact, no history of Hindi poetry can be complete without reference to the contribution of that versatile genius. He was a friend of Tulsi Das and had correspondence with him. Another Muslim poet of Hindi was Ras Khan, who was a devotee of Lord Krishna and an author of a large number of first-rate poems which depict Shri Krishna's life in the woods of Vrindaban. Many other courtiers of Akbar, such as Birbal, Man Singh, Todar Mal and others were lovers of Hindi poetry. Akbar himself loved Hindi poetry and extended patronage to Hindi poets. He is even stated to have composed some verses in that language. It is not, therefore, surprising that Hindi poetry made a remarkable progress during this reign.

The most important feature of the age was that literary activities were not confined to the court and the nobles. It was essentially a movement of the people, and a large number of scholars and poets of Hindi were found in the countryside and patronised mainly by local landlords and well-to-do public. One has to turn to the pages of *Mishra Bandhu Vinod* and Ram Chandra Shukla's *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas* to appreciate the spirit of that age whichw as responsible for the golden period of Hindi poetry.

Painting.

In spite of the Quranic prohibition Akbar loved painting. He used to say that far from making a man irreligious, painting compels a painter to turn to God and seek his assistance to bestow individuality upon his work. Like Akbar, the Persian rulers of the Safawi dynasty were liberal patrons of art and in disregard of the Quranic prohibition, they introduced Chinese or Mongolian painting in Persia, and had Chinese master-artists brought to their land to teach the art to their countrymen. Early Muslim painters confined themselves to the painting of inanimate objects, like trees, mountains, rivers and so forth. The next step was to take to the drawing of birds and animals and then finally to human portraiture. The greatest exponents of this art in Central Asia were Bihzad of Herat and his pupil, Agha Miraq

of Tabriz. Bihzad had served Sultan Husain Baiqara and subsequently entered the service of Shah Ismail of Persia. He became responsible for refining the Chinese or Mongoloid style of painting and making it essentially Persian. It was this art that was brought into India by Akbar's orders and introduced into his court. It mingled with the style of Indian painting which had come down from ancient times despite neglect and want of patronage. The tradition of Hindu painting went far back into antiquity and came down to the 16th century through its noble representatives in the caves of Ajanta. Referring to the perfection acquired by the painters of Akbar's court Abul Fazl writes, "This is specially true of the Hindus. Their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few, indeed, in the whole world are found equal to them. (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, page 107). The two styles, Persian and Indian, at Akbar's court began gradually to fuse and in course of time became one. The foreign characteristics of the art gradually dropped out and, eventually, it became purely Indian. The process of this evolution can be seen in the unique copy of the *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timuria* and a copy of the *Badshahnama* both of which are preserved in the Oriental Khuda Bakhsh Public Library at Patna. Akbar's patronage attracted the best painters to his court. The ablest and most numerous among them were Hindu painters. They were employed to paint the walls of Akbar's capital at Fatehpur Sikri and also to produce albums. Of the seventeen master-painters of Akbar's court no less than thirteen were Hindus who were experts in portrait painting. The most important among these were Daswanth, Basawan, Kesu Lal, Mukand, Madhu, Jagan, Mahesh, Tara, Khem Karan, Sanwla, Haribansh and Ram. Daswanth was the son of a *kahar* and was a palki-bearer. He was fond of painting pictures on the walls and one day Akbar chanced to see him and his art and he at once employed him as a painter and patronised his work. But when Daswanth reached the height of his fame he became insane and committed suicide. Basawan was considered by some critics as a greater painter than even Daswanth. He excelled in the painting of background and the drawing of features, distribution of colours and portraiture painting. Most of the Hindu painters, mentioned in the *Ain-i-Akbari*, belonged to the *Kayasth*, *Chitera*, *Silawat* and *Khati* castes. Some of them were commissioned to illustrate the *Razmnama*, the Persian translation of the *Mahabharata*.

Akbar created a separate department of painting and Khwaja

Abdus Samad, one of the best painters of his court, was placed at its head. Abdus Samad was a Persian who had come from Shiraz. He was given the title of 'Shirin-Qalam' or 'sweet pen'. The emperor personally supervised the department and gave it every possible encouragement. The pieces executed by the court painters were placed before him every week and he rewarded those whose paintings were found excellent. Not only were special grants made to the masters whose paintings were approved by the emperor; but increments in their salaries were also sanctioned forthwith. The artists were enrolled as royal servants and granted *mansabs* in the imperial service. They drew their salaries according to their ranks. Abdus Samad, the head of the department, was a mansabdar of four hundred, but enjoyed much greater influence at the imperial court than his rank entitled him to.

Akbar's interest and patronage led to the establishment of a school of painting which may be called the National Indian School of painting. Its members were drawn from all parts of India and even from outside. They belonged to various castes and religions. But they were inspired by one common ideal, namely, the production of works of a high quality, which would meet with the approval of the emperor who was a great connoisseur of the art.

Calligraphy.

Associated with the art of painting was the art of calligraphy which was highly prized in India, Persia and China. It was looked upon as a fine art and loved and encouraged by most of the Mughul emperors. Although Akbar was not a lettered man, he had a taste for calligraphy and employed many men skilled in penmanship. They were commissioned with the work of producing beautiful copies of books for his library. Calligraphic writing was collected and preserved in albums like pictorial art. Abul Fazl tells us that eight modes of calligraphy were in vogue at Akbar's court, of which the eighth kind, named Nastaliq, was specially favoured by Akbar. It consisted entirely of curved lines. The most important calligraphist at Akbar's court was Muhammad Husain Kashmiri who was given the title of 'Zarin Qalam'. Some of the other famous calligraphists at the court were Maulana Baqir, Muhammad Amin of Mashad, Mir Husain Kalanki and others.

Closely connected with calligraphy were the arts of artistic

binding of books and illuminating them with lovely pictorial designs. Men employed for binding and illuminating the margins and covers of books or illustrating their themes with pictorial drawings were classed as artists. They were as highly valued as painters properly so called. Many dozens of the books produced in that age, enriched by valuable bindings and adorned by costly illustrations, have come down to us and are preserved in various manuscript libraries in the country. They reveal the high standard to which these twin arts had reached under Akbar and his successors.

Music.

Like Babur, Akbar was devoted to music. "His Majesty," writes Abul Fazl, "pays much attention to music and is the patron of all who practise this enchanting art." The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the names of thirty-six first-rate musicians at his court. They were arranged in seven divisions. Each division was required to entertain the emperor for one fixed day in the week. The emperor himself was a skilled musician and no mean performer on the *Naqqara* (cattle drum). He had studied Hindu vocalisation under Lal Kalawant who taught him "every breathing and sound that appertains to the Hindi language." Early in his reign the emperor had sent for Tansen from Rewa, and raised him to a position of great importance at his court. Tansen was the most notable musician of the age and, according to Abul Fazl, "a singer like him had not been in India for the last thousand years." He had been trained in a school established at Gwalior by Raja Man Singh Tomar (1486-1518). Tansen is said to have invented some new *ragas*. He is even credited with the power of stopping the flow of the Yamuna with his music. Another famous musician was Baba Ram Das, who ranked next only to Tansen. He seems to have been attached to Bairam Khan, who was so pleased with him on one occasion that he conferred upon him a reward of one lakh of *tankas*. Another equally famous singer was Baiju Bawla (sometimes called Birju Bawla), and, though not mentioned in Abul Fazl's list, he was certainly a contemporary of Tansen and Akbar. The guide at Fatehpur Sikri points out his house outside the royal palace and legend and folk tale have preserved the memory of his rivalry with Tansen. Sur Das, son of the celebrated singer, Ram Das and one of the greatest Hindi poets of all times was also a musician of Akbar's court. The emperor's interest in and patronage of music led to great progress in the instrumental as well as the vocal art. At

his court Hindu and Muslim music mingled together and became one. To Akbar, therefore, belongs the credit of bringing about a fusion of two diverse systems of music and giving birth to the national Indian music.

Architecture.

The Turko-Afghan invaders had brought to this land the ancient vaulted architecture of Mesopotamia, which, before its advent to our country, was greatly modified under the Sassanids and the Abbasid Khalifas and was miscalled by the general name of Islamic architecture. This foreign architecture, when introduced into India, was greatly influenced by the indigenous art which had held the field and reached a remarkable level of excellence. The reasons for this were two-fold, namely, (1) the employment by the Sultans of Hindu masons and architects who unconsciously introduced in the Muslim buildings their own ideas of art, and (2) the fact that early Muslim buildings were constructed out of the materials of Hindu temples and palaces which the conquerors had destroyed. In spite of the above circumstances, the buildings erected by the Sultans of Delhi and by those of the independent local dynasties that came into existence as a result of the decline of the Sultanate, were mainly foreign in design and workmanship. It was reserved for Akbar to make a conscious effort to amalgamate the two styles and lay the foundation of the national Indian architecture. He had his own conception of architecture and planned many buildings, such as palaces, mosques, tombs and forts. He established a public works department and his plans were carried out by his able architects and engineers. "His Majesty," writes Abul Fazl, "plans splendid edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay." (Ain 85 on Buildings vide *Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 222). Akbar built three gigantic forts, namely, the Agra fort, the Lahore fort and the Allahabad fort. The Agra fort resembles that at Gwalior, which, as Percy Brown points out, must have furnished a model for Akbar's great edifice at Agra. Its circumference is nearly one and a half miles and it has two main gate-ways, namely, the Delhi gate and the Amar Singh gate. Inside the fort, Akbar built about five hundred buildings of red sand-stone. Most of these were pulled down by Shahjahan, whose taste differed from that of his grandfather and who preferred white marble to red sand-stone. Some of the buildings of Akbar, however, are still extant. The most important

of these are the Akbari Mahal and the Jahangiri Mahal. These two palaces are built after the same pattern. The Jahangiri Mahal abounds in beautifully carved stone brackets which support the stone beams, wide caves and flat ceilings. According to critics, it is so much Hindu in design that it can hardly be out of place at Chittor or Udaipur. The Lahore fort was constructed at almost the same time as the Agra fort. The buildings inside were similar to Jahangiri Mahal at Agra with only one difference that the decoration in Lahore fort is more vigorous and unrestrained than at Agra. Elephants and lions figure in the brackets and peacocks at the friezes from which it may be inferred that Hindu craftsmanship predominated and that the supervision of the Mughul overseers was of a very tolerant character. The Allahabad fort was built at a later date and many of its buildings, including its inner wall, have disappeared. The *Zanana* palace, which is still intact, shows that one of the special features of the buildings in this fort was "the number of distribution of its pillars with their super-structures". The greatest architectural achievement of Akbar, however, was his new capital at Fatehpur Sikri. On a ridge, two miles long and one mile broad, Akbar built a remarkable city, three sides of which were surrounded by a wall and the fourth side by an artificial lake. The walls had nine gates. The principal entrance was the Agra Gate which lay opposite to that city. The most important buildings inside the enclosure are the Record office, Diwan-i-Khas and Diwan-i-Am, the Treasury, the Panch Mahal, Maryam's palace, the Turkish Sultana's palace, the emperor's sleeping chambers and Library, Jodha Bai's palace and Birbal's palace. Outside the enclosure, stands the Jami Mosque with its lofty portal known as the Buland Darwaza. Inside the enclosure of the mosque lies the tomb of Shaikh Salim Chishti which is built of white marble. Most of these buildings reveal a mixed style, which is partly Muslim and mainly Hindu in character. The decorative features in some of them are copies of those in the Hindu and Jain temples. The critics consider Diwan-i-Khas to be one of the most remarkable buildings. The Buland Darwaza, which is built of marble and sand-stone, is "one of the most perfect architectural achievements in the whole of India." Fatehpur Sikri took about eleven years to complete (1569-1580) and, though it is a deserted place "it still forms a most impressive revelation of a mighty personality". According to Fergusson it is a reflex of the great man who built it. Akbar built several other notable buildings, such as the fort at Attock, a mosque at Amber and

one at Merta, some at other places, and his mausoleum at Sikandra, which was designed by him but modified and completed by his son, Jahangir.

Abul Fazl tells us that Akbar built many *sarais* and excavated many tanks and wells for the benefit of the people. He also erected many schools and places of worship. "Everywhere also," writes he, "*sarais* have been built which are the comfort of travellers and the asylum of poor strangers.". "Many tanks and wells are being dug for the benefit of the men and improvement of the soil. Schools and places of worship are being founded and triumphal arch of India is annually erected." (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 224)

The new style of architecture representing the combination of the best features of the indigenous and foreign styles, which may be called by the name of Mughul architecture, produced a profound effect on buildings all over the country, including those of the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan. The palaces built during the reign of Akbar at Amber, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Orchha and Datia indicate unmistakable Mughul influence. "It is not difficult," writes Percy Brown, "to see in such buildings how the stone structures of the early Mughuls by the addition of engrailed arches, glass mosaics, painted plaster, guilded gesso, and graffitos were adapted to the more colourful requirements of the Hindu princes." (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 548)

Not only civil buildings, but even the Hindu temples could not escape the nationalizing effects of Akbar's architecture. While Akbar had freely borrowed from indigenous temple architecture, Hindu temples erected during his reign did not fail to borrow some of the features of the new eclectic style evolved at Agra and Fatehpur Sikri. Hindu temples at Vrindavan show clearly that certain of their features are borrowed from the contemporary style of the Mughuls.

Decorative carving was an important feature of Mughul architecture. Carvings in Turkish Sultana's palace at Fatehpur Sikri and Akbar's tomb at Sikandra include representations of plants, flowers, butterflies, sunsets, and the conventional vase designs. Perforated lattice work was equally highly prized. Mosaic and ebony decoration, in which our craftsmen of the Mughul age were

proficient, was also lavishly used in the buildings of the time. Glazed tiles and decorative carvings form another special feature of the Mughul architecture. The Turkish Sultana's palace at Fatehpur Sikri is one of the finest specimens of glazed tile work.

Gardens.

There existed gardens in India before the advent of the Mughuls; but they were not geometrically designed and erected pleasances in all cases. Babur brought to our country the new style of gardens which had been developed in Persia and Turkistan and whose chief characteristic was "artificial irrigation in the form of channels, basins or tanks, and dwarf water-falls, so built that the water brimmed to the level of the paths on either side; and the plan involved a series of terraces on sloping ground, usually numbering eight to correspond with the eight divisions of Quranic paradise: but sometimes seven to symbolise the seven planets." The main pavilion was often built on the top-most terrace and sometimes on the lowest terrace, in order to enable the occupant to have an uninterrupted view of the fountain and water-falls. Akbar laid out gardens in his palaces; but the most important garden associated with his name is that at Sikandra. In the centre of this garden stands his beautiful mausoleum. The plan of this garden is a four-fold plot (*charbagh*) surrounded by a huge enclosure with four gates in the middle of each of the four walls. The mausoleum, which stands in the centre, is flanked by tanks with central fountains. There are symmetrical channels of water. The channels and water-courses are paved with fine ceramic ware and are lined with cypress and wild pine trees, palm trees and other beautiful plants.

Akbar laid out fruit gardens also, and he was fond of horticulture. "His majesty," writes Abul Fazl, "looks upon fruits as one of the grea·est gifts of the Creator, and pays much attention to them. The horticulturists of Iran and Turan have, therefore, settled here and the cultivation of trees is in a flourishing state." (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, page 64)

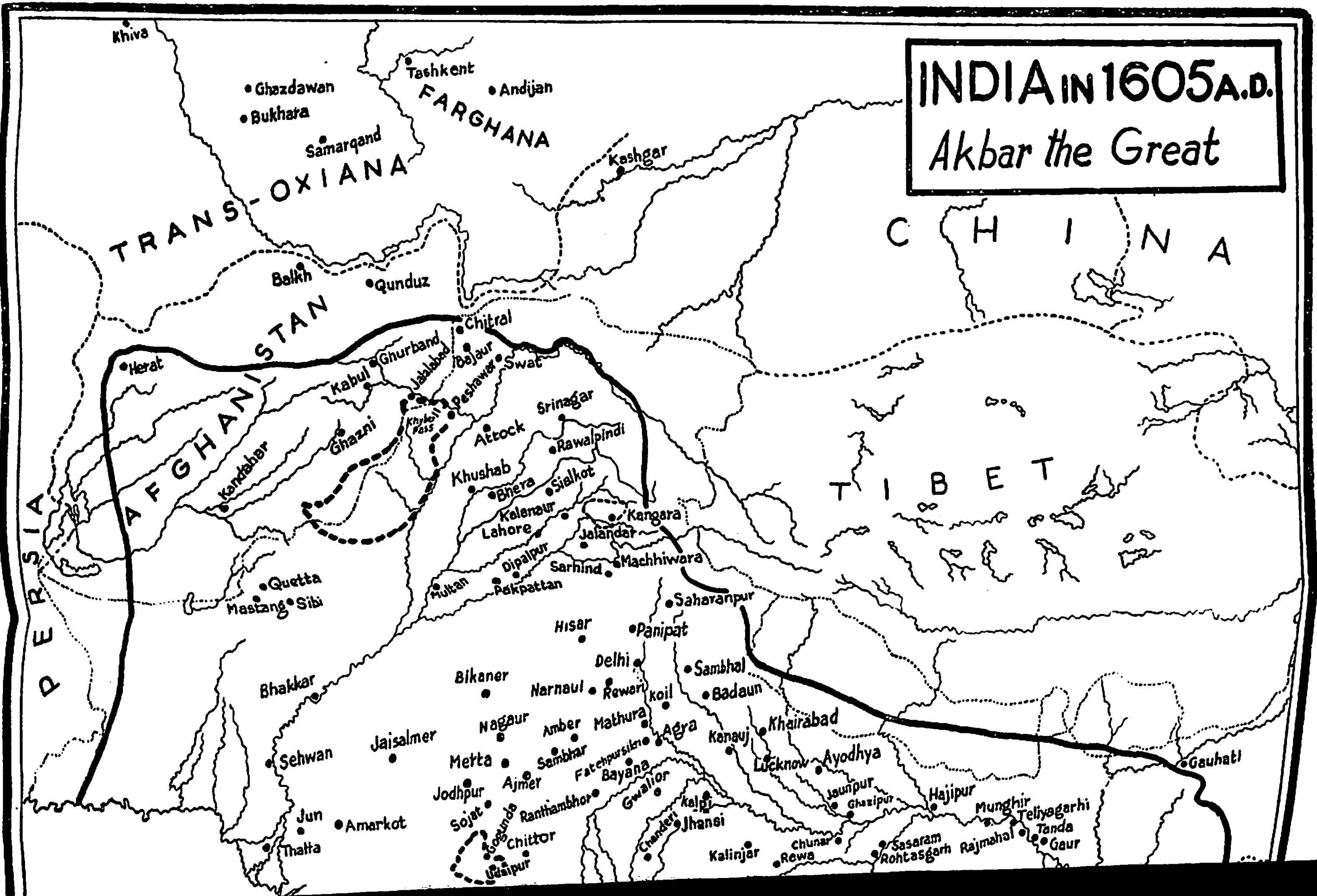
Personality and Character.

Akbar was gifted with an imposing appearance and looked 'every inch a king'. Contemporary writers are unanimous in maintaining that he was possessed of an uncommon dignity and that no one could fail to be impressed with his extraordinary presence.

Jahangir gives the following pen-picture of his father: "He was of the middle height, but inclining to be tall; he was of the hue of wheat; his eyes and eyebrows were black and his complexion rather dark than fair; he was lion-bodied, with a broad cl est, and his hands and arms long. On the left side of his nose he had a fleshy mole, very agreeable in appearance, of the size of half a pea. Those skilled in the science of physiognomy considered this mole a sign of great prosperity and exceeding good fortune. His august voice was very loud, and in speaking and explaining had a peculiar richness. In his actions and movements he was not like the people of the world, and the glory of God manifested itself in him." (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, Vol. I, pages 33-34).

Another eye-witness, Father Monserrate, who had the privilege of close association with Akbar, writes, "He was in face and stature fit for the dignity of King, so that anybody, even at the first glance, would easily recognise him as the King. His shoulders were broad, and his legs slightly bandy and adapted to riding. His complexion was fair, but slightly suffered with a darker tint. He carried his head slightly inclined to one side, towards the right shoulder; his brow was broad and open and his eyes sparkled as does the sea when lighted by the sun. His eyelids were heavy as are those of Sarmatians, the Chinese, the Niphonians, and nearly all Asiatics of the more northern regions. His eyebrows were narrow, and his nose was of the middle size and drooping, but had a high bridge. His nostrils were expanded as though he were enraged and, on the left one he had a wart, which met the upper-lip. He shaved his beard, but not his moustache, following the customs of young Turks before they assume the full costume of manhood...Unlike his forefathers, he did not shave his head, nor did he wear a cap, but bound his hair with a turban, which, they say, he did in imitation of the Indian custom in order to conciliate them. He dragged his left leg slightly, as though he were lame in it, though he had not been injured in the foot. He has in his body, which is very well-made, and neither thin and meagre nor fat and gross, much courage and strength. When he laughs he is distorted, but when he is tranquil and serene he has a noble mien and great dignity. In his wrath he is majestic." (Father Monserrate quoted in the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 155)

Akbar had a very attractive personality and his manners were


INDIA IN 1605 A.D.
Akbar the Great
CHINA
TIBET
TRANS-OXIANA
FARGHANA
AFGHANISTAN
PERSIA
Khiva
Ghazdawan
Bukhara
Samarqand
Tashkent
Andijan
Kashgar
Balkh
Qunduz
Herat
Chitral
Ghurband
Kabul
Jalalabad
Bajaur
Peshawar
Swat
Khyber Pass
Ghazni
Kandahar
Srinagar
Attock
Rawalpindi
Khushab
Bhera
Sialkot
Kalanaur
Lahore
Kangara
Jalandar
Dipalpur
Sarhind
Machhiwara
Multan
Pakpattan
Quetta
Mastang
Sibi
Saharanpur
Hisar
Panipat
Delhi
Sambhal
Bhakkar
Bikaner
Narnaul
Rewari
Koil
Badaun
Nagaur
Amber
Mathura
Agra
Kanauj
Khairabad
Jaisalmer
Sehwan
Merta
Sambhar
Fatehpursikri
Bayana
Lucknow
Ayodhya
Gauhati
Jodhpur
Ajmer
Ranthambhor
Gwalior
Kalpi
Jaunpur
Ghazipur
Hajipur
Munghir
Teliyagarhi
Jun
Amarkot
Sojat
Gogunda
Chittor
Chanderi
Jhansi
Chunar
Sasaram
Rohtasgarh
Rajmahal
Tanda
Gaur
Thatta
Udaipur
Kalinjar
Rewa

Anhilwara
Ahmadabad
Cambay
Baroda
Ujjain
Mandu
Bhilsa
Raisin
Garhamandal
Ratanpur
Chatgaon
Diu
Surat
Sarnal
Burhanpur
Asirgarh
Gwaligarh
Balapur
Daulatabad
Rajaura
Pathri
Nander
Ahmadnagar
AHMADNAGAR
GONDWANA
Puri
ARABIAN SEA
BAY OF BANGAL
BIDAR
Bidar
Golkunda
GOLKUNDA
Rajamundry
BIJAPUR
Bijapur
Raichur
Goa
POLYGARS
Kanchi
Tanjore
CEYLON
ANDAMAN Is.

Boundary of the Empire.
Semi-independant Kingdoms.
Indepependent Kingdoms.

0 50 100 150 200 250 300
Miles

charming. He was so valorous that he could cut off a lion's neck with one stroke of his sword. Whenever he liked he could easily disregard all inclemencies of climate and weather and endure any kind of fatigue and privations. He was accustomed to hard work and would often walk miles together. He was frank, attentive and witty in conversation. He was so sympathetic to the common people that "he always found time gladly to hear their cases and to respond graciously to their requests. Their little offerings, too, he used to accept with such a pleased look, handling them and putting them on his bosom, as he did not do with the most lavish gifts of the nobles, which with discrete pretence he often seemed not even to glance at." (*Du Jarric*, III, 133, quoted in Smith's *Akbar, the Great Mogul*, p. 335)

As a gentleman, Akbar left little to be desired. He was a dutiful son, an indulgent brother and father and a loving husband. He was faithful to his friends and did everything to advance their interest. On the death of his intimate friend, Abul Fazl, he wept bitterly and refused to touch food for two days. Although polygamous like other princes, he was thoroughly devoted to his wives. He had faith in human nature and considered it his duty to protect the poor and the helpless.

Akbar used to wear a surcoat or tunic which came down to his knees. It was made of silk and interwoven with gold thread, decorated with embroidered patterns of flowers and foliage and fastened by a large clasp. His turban was so rolled up as to combine Hindu and Muslim styles. It was decorated with costly pearls and other gems. His trousers came down to his heels and were fastened by knots of pearls. As was the fashion of the time, he had always a dagger in his girdle.

Extremely moderate in his diet, Akbar did not touch meat for more than nine months in the year. In his early days, however, he used to eat meat every day. Even then he was not fond of it. In his later years he gave up meat diet almost altogether. Akbar's habit was to take one substantial meal a day; but his menu consisted of a large number of dishes. He drank wine whenever he liked, though very sparingly indeed. But he was fond of fruit which he looked upon as a gift from Nature. A large variety was produced in the country under his direction and patronage.

Unlike his ancestors and descendants, Akbar was illiterate. He had been a truant child and did not sit down to learn his lessons. There has, in recent years, been a controversy regarding Akbar's illiteracy and some scholars have held that he was not altogether unlettered. But the evidence to the contrary is so overwhelming that one cannot but look upon this theory as nothing more than special pleading. Besides the testimony of the Jesuit missionaries, Monserrate and Jerome Xavier (*vide* J.R.A.S., 1912, p. 194 and of 1888, p. 37), we have the weighty remark of Jahangir that, although his father was illiterate, yet he was so intimately acquainted with various branches of knowledge and so expert in expounding it that no one could imagine that he was an illiterate man. (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* by Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. I, p. 33). Abul Fazl writes, "His holy heart and his sacred soul never turned towards external teaching and his possession of the most excellent sciences together with his disinclination for the learning of letters was a method of showing to mankind....that the *lofty comprehension of the Lord of the age was not learnt and acquired, but was the gift of God in which human effort had no part.*" (*Akbarnama*, Vol. I, p. 589). In spite of these obvious handicaps, Akbar was not an ignorant man in any sense of the term. He had acquired a great deal of knowledge of theology, literature, poetry, philosophy, history and some other sciences, by contact with learned men of all branches of knowledge and by having books read out to him everyday. His memory was so marvellous that he remembered accurately the contents of books read out to him as also the minute details of administrative business. He possessed clarity of thought and fluency in expression. He was fond of discoursing on difficult subjects of philosophy and religion with the great scholars of the age so eloquently that no one could even imagine that he was illiterate.

Akbar was deeply religious. Sometimes he was assailed by doubt, to remove which he would spend days and nights in study, thought and discussion with learned men. He made a comparative study of different religions, which enabled him to see the shortcomings of Islam. Though he lost faith in the religion of his boyhood and youth, yet he continued to be religious. He prayed four times, morning, noon, evening and midnight, spending considerable time over his prayers. Apart from these, his life was a continuous search for truth. He was fascinated by such metaphysical subjects as the enquiry regarding the relations between God and man, and his happy

sayings show his supreme faith in the Almighty. "There is no need," he would often say, "to discuss the point that a vacuum in nature is impossible. God is omnipresent."

"There exists a bond between the Creator and the creature which is not expressible in language."

"Each person according to his condition gives the Supreme Being a Name, but in reality to name the Unknownable is vain."

But Akbar was not a perfect man as Abul Fazl would have us believe. Nor was his personal character altogether above blame. Although the stories of his so-called anxious search for beautiful women in the weekly Mina Bazars held in the palace and the popular legend of his clash with the spirited wife of Prithvi Raj Rathor of Bikaner, who was alleged to have taken out her dagger to defend her honour, are later inventions of the fertile bardic imagination and have no foundation in fact and although the emperor was not a licentious profligate in thought or in deed, he did allow himself latitude, at least in his early years, in the matter of wives, and his harem contained 5,000 women. Making due allowance for the presence of female relatives and servants, the number of his queens must have been considerable. In this respect Akbar did not rise above the standard of the age. He was not a teetotaller, and was also familiar with duplicity. At times he lost temper, became subject to violent paroxyms of rage, and inflicted unduly harsh punishments. But such lapses were rare and lasted only for a short time. It must be said in fairness to him that he knew the value of moderation and never became a slave to passion or a prey to any kind of weakness.

A great soldier and general, Akbar was possessed of extraordinary courage and bodily strength. His uncommon power of endurance enabled him to defy inclemency of weather and other physical hardships to which most men succumb. Gifted with originality, organizing ability of a high order and a magnetic personality, he could easily enforce discipline among his troops and lead them on to success. His was, therefore, a career of unbroken victories. His motto was: "A monarch should always be intent on conquest, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him. The army should always be exercised in warfare, lest from want of training

they become self-indulgent." He thus believed in a policy of aggressive conquest. His army was almost perfect in organization, and he had made use of a system of warfare that was well-suited to the genius of our people and to the age in which he lived.

As has been shown elsewhere in this book, Akbar made a radical change in the theory of kingship. He was the first ruler in Medieval India to discard the Islamic basis of sovereignty and to lay down the principle that the king was the father of all his people irrespective of caste, race or religion. He thus revived the ancient Hindu ideal and made a conscious effort to bridge the gulf between the ruler and the ruled. He saw the vision of a united India and worked hard to translate it into a reality. He was not satisfied with mere political unity, but desired to strengthen it by cultural, social, economic unity and, if possible, also by religious uniformity. No monarch in that age was inspired by more lofty ideals.

As an administrator and a statesman Akbar stands unrivalled. He was a constructive genius and possessed the rare gift of combining the knowledge of broad original principles of administration with a mastery over minute details of various departments of government. He had the ability of introducing new administrative devices congenial to the genius of the people and suitable for the emergency. He had the courage to discard out-worn and pernicious customs, no matter if these were sanctified by tradition, time or religion. His discarding of the Quranic theory of kingship and abolition of the hated taxes like the pilgrims' tax and the *jizya*, which had centuries of religious sanction behind them, are instances in point. Only a ruler of extraordinary ability and strength of character could have thought of dis-establishing Islam as the religion of the State or granting a complete religious toleration and equality of status to all religions. In short, Akbar was a very wise and courageous ruler and statesman who transformed the very basis of his government to suit the circumstances of the age and the welfare of all his subjects.

He was truly a national king. Dr. R.P. Tripathi holds that his ideal of sovereignty was universal, not national. This view is based on the assumption that Akbar's desire was to conquer Central Asia, including Farghana, which formed the kingdom of his ancestors, and to annex it to his empire. It would have been impossible, he

argues, to exercise sway over such a heterogeneous dominion, inhabited by diverse races, without subscribing to the ideal of universal kingship. What Akbar would have done or not done is only a matter of conjecture. We are not concerned with what might have been. The fact remains that he identified himself completely with India and her culture and did his very best to advance her political, social, economic and cultural interests as well as any one who might have belonged to the Indian race and to the religion of the vast majority of her population. He dreamt of a united India, and, by diplomacy and conquest, brought the whole of northern India and a part of the Dakhin under one government and one political system. He established in the whole of his empire a uniform system of administration. The provinces of the empires of Chandragupta Maurya and Samudragupta were an ill-cemented mass held together only by the common bond of allegiance to the emperor. So also were the provinces of the Sultanate of Delhi under Alauddin Khalji, Muhammad bin Tughluq and others. Akbar, on the other hand, gave all the provinces of his empire the same system of administration, the same set of officials, the same administrative methods, the same revenue system and the same coinage. The officers in the provinces bore the same titles and were members of the same imperial service, and the soldiers and officers were transferred from province to province. This gave the empire political and administrative unity of the highest kind possible in that age. Secondly, Akbar attempted to give his empire cultural unity by making Persian the court language and compulsory for all state servants and by providing in that language (either by translation or by original compositions) the best Hindu and Muslim thought, religious as well as secular. It has already been shown that the translation department at his capital rendered into Persian our ancient scriptures, including the *Vedas* and other valuable Sanskrit works on various sciences. Similarly, notable books of Arabic, Turki and even Greek were translated into Persian. All this was done to provide a common literature for the upper and middle classes of our population. Moreover, most of the fine arts, such as architecture, painting and music, were nationalized and made the common property of the Hindus and Musalmans alike. Thirdly, Akbar sought to strengthen our society by doing away with some of its evils. He tried to abolish *Sati*, child-marriage and old-age marriage. He exercised strict supervision over prostitutes and segregated them. Similarly, he compelled butchers, hunters and washers of dead bodies

to reside outside the town. He did not allow circumcision before the age of twelve, and allowed Muslim converts to go back to their original religion if they liked. Fourthly, he regulated trade and industry so as to give economic prosperity to the land. Many kinds of manufacturing industries were encouraged and the country became so prosperous as to dazzle the foreign travellers and ambassadors. Finally, Akbar attempted to bring about a synthesis of the various religions in his empire with a view to doing away with narrow bigotry and religious separatism and strife. Although he did not succeed in this noble task, yet he won the gratitude of a vast majority of his subjects and earned the title of a national king.

Place in history.

Akbar's idealism, natural gifts, force of character and concrete achievements entitle him to a high place among the rulers of mankind. His lofty patriotism and intellectual superiority alone easily raised him head and shoulders above all other kings of medieval India. But he was not a mere idealist or a visionary. He was first and foremost a realist who always faced facts and tried to place his feet upon the bed-rock of a situation instead of soaring high in the air. That was the reason why he had great positive achievements to his credit. This rare combination of idealism and realism entitled Akbar to the first place among the Muslim rulers of India and one of the first among the most important and successful monarchs, both Hindu and Muslim, this country had ever had. Akbar's age was an age of great rulers. His contemporaries were Elizabeth of England, Henry IV of France and Abbas the Great of Persia. He was unquestionably superior to them all in more respects than one. The historian Smith is right when he says: "He was a born king of men, with a rightful claim to rank as one of the greatest sovereigns known to history."

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CHAPTER VI

JAHANGIR (1569-1627)

Early Career, 1569-1605.

Jahangir was a child of many prayers. Akbar, who had lost all the children of his early youth, ardently desired an heir who should live to inherit his vast empire. He prayed to God, besought the blessings of saints, and walked to the mausoleum of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti at Ajmer and waited on other well-known saints of that time. At last Shaikh Salim Chishti of Fatehpur Sikri promised him three sons. When early in 1569, his Rajput consort, the Jaipur princess, Maryam-uz-Zamani, became in the family way, she was sent to the Shaikh's hermitage where she gave birth on 30th August, 1569, to a child who was named Sultan Muhammad Salim after the Shaikh. Akbar, however, called him Shaikhu Baba. The emperor fulfilled his vow of making his journey on foot to Ajmer and paying his homage to the shrine of Khwaja Muinuddin Chishti. The child was brought up with all possible care and affection and, when he grew up, arrangements were made for his education at the new capital, Fatehpur Sikri, where Akbar had erected a lofty palace surrounded by other magnificent buildings. His school-going ceremony took place on November 28, 1573. One after another a series of able tutors were appointed to teach the prince Persian, Turki, Arabic and Hindi, arithmetic, history and geography and other important sciences. But the man who influenced the prince most and moulded his thoughts was Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, a versatile genius, a profound scholar of Arabic, Turki, Persian, Sanskrit and Hindi and, at the same time, a soldier and diplomat of no mean order. Under his guidance, Salim mastered Persian and learnt Turki and Hindi. He learnt, also, to compose verses in Persian and to take delight in Hindi songs. He was taught history and geography and took interest in botany, zoology, music, painting and other fine arts. Physical and military education was not neglected. He was taught to cultivate physical exercises and to handle weapons of offence and defence. In due course he became a fine shot and a mighty hunter.

In conformity with the practice of that age, he was associated with the work of military administration at an early age. During the Kābul campaign of 1581, he was placed in charge of a regiment of troops and, subsequently, employed to conduct independent military expeditions. Likewise, he was given training of a civil administrator. In 1577, he was elevated to the rank of 10,000 in the imperial service and in 1585 promoted to that of 12,000.

At the age of fifteen, Salim was betrothed to his cousin Manbai, daughter of Raja Bhagwan Das of Amber, and their marriage took place on 13th February, 1585. The ceremony was performed both according to Hindu and Muslim rites. Bhagwan Das gave a rich dowry. The off-spring of this union was the ill-fated Khusrav, who was destined to a stormy life and bloody death. Jahangir was devoted to Manbai, who was given the title of Shah Begam and who committed suicide in 1604 owing to her son's unfilial conduct towards her husband. Jahangir was so much affected by this incident that he did not touch food or water for full four days. During her life-time, the prince had married several other wives, the most important of whom was Jagat Gosain or Jodhabai, daughter of Mota Raja Udai Singh. Later on the number of women in his harem swelled to eight hundred. He had become familiar with wine at an early age and now he became addicted to other sensual pleasures.

Salim's revolt, 1599-1604.

Salim's loose morals and addiction to wine and other degrading pleasures enraged Akbar who tried to bring him round by advice and threat of punishment. But the estrangement between father and son became deeper due to Salim's ambition of succeeding to his father's dignity and throne without waiting for the latter's death. Some European writers have alleged that the cause of misunderstanding between them was Akbar's apostasy and Salim's championship of the cause of Islam. This is, however, baseless. The prince was not, from any point of view, an orthodox Musalman and was incapable of championing its cause. The first open estrangement occurred in 1591, when Salim was suspected of poisoning his father at the time of the latter's illness. The suspicion was unfounded. In 1599, when Akbar set out for the Dakhin to reconquer Khandesh, he directed Salim to attack Rana Amar Singh of Mewar; but instead of proceeding to invade Mewar, the prince loitered at Ajmer and,

animated by ambition and corrupted by base associates, he broke into open rebellion. Having enriched himself by seizing over a crore of cash and other effects belonging to Shahbaz Khan Kamboh, who had died about that time, Salim made a dash for Agra in order to capture the huge treasure, amounting to more than two crores, stored in that fort. He was, however, foiled in his attempt, and therefore, crossing the Yamuna he went to Allahabad and established his court there. He brought a part of Bihar under his control and set himself up as an independent king. He appropriated thirty lakhs of rupees in the treasury of Bihar and appointed an officer to administer that part of the country under his control. When the news of this rebellion reached Akbar at Asirgarh, he sent Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, a playmate and friend of the prince, to Allahabad on a mission of peace. But Salim won over Sharif and appointed him his chief minister. In consequence of the above development, Akbar was obliged to conclude the siege of Asirgarh and hasten to Agra by the middle of 1601. Salim now proceeded towards Agra at the head of 30,000 troops, robbing and plundering the country on the way and declaring that his object was to pay his respects to his father. The emperor ordered the prince to dismiss his followers and return to Allahabad immediately. Fearing the use of force by the emperor and his own defeat, the prince sent assurance of his fidelity and allegiance, whereupon the emperor appointed him governor of Bangal and Orissa. Salim then returned to Allahabad; but he did not give up his evil intentions, nor sent his men to take charge of Bangal and Orissa. He assumed the title of king and held a regular court, issued farmans and granted titles and jagirs. He made an unsuccessful attempt to procure military assistance from the Portuguese of Goa. Tormented by the rebellion, Akbar summoned Abul Fazl from the Dakhin to take counsel with him. The prince had Abul Fazl murdered by Bir Singh Deva, a rebellious Bundela chief of Orchha, on 19th August, 1602, between Barki Sarai and Antri. Akbar burst into grief and rage as soon as the news was broken to him. He abstained for three days from appearing in public. He railed bitterly against Salim and ordered Bir Singh to be put to death. But the man escaped and lived to enjoy Jahangir's favour.

Although Salim deserved condign punishment, Akbar did not think it politic to take such a step. The emperor's second son, Murad, was already dead and his third son, Daniyal, was visibly

dying. His grandsons were too young. The ladies of the harem urged the emperor to forgive and forget. Salima Begam, Jahangir's step-mother, begged the emperor's permission to go to Allahabad on a mission of peace. Her request was granted. She successfully persuaded the prince to return to his path of duty. The prince came to Agra and was conducted to the presence of his father by his grandmother Mariyam Makani who threw Salim on Akbar's feet. Akbar raised him up and embraced him. Salim presented 770 elephants and twelve thousand gold *mohars.* The emperor not only graciously forgave him but also rewarded him and appointed him heir-apparent.

In order to wean him from his evil associates, the emperor ordered him, on 14th October, 1603, to proceed on the Mewar expedition, which he had failed to accomplish in 1599. Salim proceeded as far as Fatehpur Sikri; but, feeling himself incompetent to reduce the Rana to submission, he begged permission to return to Allahabad. Akbar complied with the request. At Allahabad the prince again fell into evil ways and again assumed semi-independent state. The emperor was highly enraged and prepared to march to Allahabad to bring the prince round by force. But the illness and death of his mother prevented him from executing his designs. He thought of superseding Salim by the latter's son, prince Khusrav, who was in his seventeenth year and was connected by the closest ties of blood with two of the greatest nobles of the empire. He was son of the sister of Man Singh of Amber and son-in-law of Mirza Aziz Koka. Khusrav was handsome in appearance, agreeable in manners and blameless in his private life. But to designate him heir-apparent without putting Salim to death would have been highly improper. So Akbar gave up the idea. Salim, on his part, felt that his own interest demanded that he should proceed to Agra and submit to his father unconditionally. So he repaired to the court to condole his father on the death of his grandmother. Akbar received him well at the public audience hall; but, while in the inner apartment, he had him arrested, rebuked him for his unseemly conduct, and slapped him in the face and imprisoned him in a bath room under the charge of a physician. After ten days' confinement, the prince was released and restored to favour. As Akbar's youngest son, Daniyal, died on 20th April, 1604, Salim now remained the only surviving son and heir. Akbar, consequently, desisted from inflicting any more punishment upon him.

Meanwhile, Akbar's health began to fail. He had an attack of dysentery on October 3, 1605, and his condition became worse from day to day. Two parties were formed at court, one supporting Salim and the other his son, Khusrav. Man Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka favoured the supersession of Salim and the accession of Khusrav; but they found themselves in a minority. Ram Das Kachhwaha placed a guard of his Rajputs over the royal treasury in order to secure the interest of Salim, and many Muslim nobles, including the Sayyids of Barha, declared for him. On 21st October, the dying emperor had his imperial turban placed on the head of Salim and his sword hung from his girdle, thus recognising him as his successor. On Akbar's death at mid-night on 25-26 October (15-16 O.S.), 1605, Salim's party found itself stronger than that of Khusrav. It had already exacted two promises from the prince, namely that he would protect Islam and forgive Khusrav and his supporters. There was no opposition to his accession which took place on the eighth day of Akbar's death.

Accession, November 3, 1605.

Jahangir's coronation ceremony was performed on Thursday, the 3rd November (24th October old style), 1605, in the fort of Agra. He put the crown on his head with his own hands and assumed the title of Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padshah Ghazi. He released many prisoners and struck coins in his name. He issued a proclamation of policy in twelve celebrated regulations.

(1) He prohibited the levy of many cesses, called tamgha, mir bahri and by other names.

(2) He ordered the building of sarais, mosques and wells along the roads.

(3) He prohibited the opening of merchants' bales without their knowledge and permission.

(4) If someone died, his property should be given to his heirs. If the deceased person had no heir, the property should be placed in the custody of a State Officer to be used for the erection and repair of public buildings.

(5) He prohibited the manufacture and sale of wine and intoxicating drugs.

(6) Government officers were ordered not to take possession of anyone's house.

(7) He abolished the punishment of cutting off nose and ears.

(8) He forbade the officials to take possession of cultivators' land by force.

(9) No government collector or jagirdar was to inter-marry with the people of his pargana without royal permission.

(10) Government hospitals were to be established in big cities for the treatment of poor people.

(11) He prohibited the slaughter of animals on certain days in the year and two days in every week, that is, Thursday which was Jahangir's accession day, and Sunday, the day of Akbar's birth.

(12) He confirmed all officers and jagirdars in the posts which they had held in Akbar's time.

He caused a gold chain with bells to be hung between the Shah Burj in the Agra Fort and a post on the road near the bank of the Yamuna so as to enable suitors for justice to ring the bell and approach the emperor without the mediation of any officer or servant.

Jahangir confirmed most of the officials, high or low, in the rank and posts which they had held during the last days of Akbar's reign and promoted even some of those with whom he was not on good terms. Abdur Razzaq Mamuri and Khwaja Abdullah, who had deserted him to join Akbar, were allowed to retain their offices and jagirs. Abul Fazl's son, Abdur Rahman, was promoted to the rank of two thousand. Both Man Singh and Mirza Aziz Koka were forgiven for backing up the claims of his son, Khusrav, to the throne; but though they were allowed to retain their posts, they no longer enjoyed the same influence at court which they had done under Akbar. A little later the governorship of Bangal, which was held by Man Singh, who was now recalled to court, was conferred on the new emperor's favourite, Qutub-ud-din Khan Koka. Out of a feeling of gratitude, which was innate in his temperament, Jahangir raised several of his favourites, who were not possessed of special ability, to high posts. To this category belonged Sharif Khan (now

appointed grand Wazir), Qutub-ud-din Koka and Bir Singh Deva Bundela of Orchha, all of whom were promoted to high offices. Among the new appointments two were particularly deserving. Ghiyas Beg, who later became famous as the father of Nur Jahan, was appointed diwan or revenue minister and given the title of Itimad-ud-daulah. Zaman Beg was given the title of Mahabat Khan and raised to the mansab of 1,500.

Rebellion of Khusrav, April-May, 1606.

Within a few months of Jahangir's accession occurred the rebellion of his eldest son, Khusrav. The emperor had forgiven him for his past conduct on the intercession of his maternal uncle Raja Man Singh of Amber, but had confined the prince in one corner of the Agra fort soon after Man Singh's departure for Bangal. Khusrav, who had not forgotten the prospect of his succession to his grandfather's throne and the support of powerful nobles at the court, could not reconcile himself to the indignity to which he was now subjected as a State prisoner and planned to set himself free and make a bid for the throne which had once been almost within his grasp. Accompanied by 350 horse, he slipped out of the fort in the evening of April 6, 1606, on the pretence of a visit to Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra, and proceeded quickly towards Delhi. On the way, he was joined by Husain Beg Badakhshi at the head of 300 horse and soon his followers swelled to 12,000. Next, the prince intercepted an imperial convoy of one lakh of rupees. Passing by Delhi, he made his way to Lahore and was joined on the way by Abdur Rahman, the diwan of that province. The prince appointed Abdur Rahman his wazir. At Taran Taran the prince obtained the benediction of Guru Arjun, the fifth guru of the Sikhs. When he reached Lahore he found its doors closed and fort put in a state of defence by the governor, Dilawar Khan. Khusrav besieged the fort but could not take it.

Within a few hours of Khusrav's flight, the news leaked to the emperor who made prompt arrangements for pursuing the fugitive, sending a contingent of troops under the command of Shaikh Farid. In order to lose no time, the emperor himself proceeded to Lahore which was being besieged by the prince.

In order to avoid being caught between the two forces, Khusrav left a detachment of his army before Lahore and himself

turned back at the head of ten thousand men to give battle to the imperialists. Jahangir's attempt at persuading his son to submit to him peacefully having failed, the parties engaged in a fight on the plain of Bharowal. In spite of his superior number, Khusrav was badly defeated and escaped with a few trusted friends, like Abdur Rahman and Husain Beg, leaving his box of jewels to be picked up by the imperialists.

Having decided to follow the advice of Husain Beg to capture Kabul and from there invade Delhi to seize the throne Khusrav crossed the Chenab at the ferry of Shahpur; but he, along with his men, was captured by the imperialists who had been sent in pursuit of the fugitives. Jahangir, who was encamped at Lahore, was delighted to hear the news of the prince's arrest and ordered him to be brought to his camp. On May 1, 1607, Khusrav was brought handcuffed and enchained before the emperor in a full darbar. The prince, who had Husain Beg on his right and Abdur Rahim on his left, trembled and wept and attempted to prostrate before Jahangir; but he was ordered to stand in his place. The emperor bitterly reproached the rebel prince and ordered him to be imprisoned. Husain Beg and Abdur Rahim, his two principal followers, were sewn in the fresh skin of an ox and of an ass respectively. They were seated on asses with their faces turned to the tail and were paraded through the streets of Lahore. Husain Beg died within twelve hours. Abdur Rahim was, however, pardoned after twenty-four hours suffering. The humbler followers of Khusrav were impaled on a mile-long row of gibbets and he was led on an elephant through the line of gibbets and asked ironically to receive the homage of his followers. His tender heart was shocked and he spent several days in weeping.

Jahangir now turned to Guru Arjun who had bestowed benediction on Khusrav while the latter was on his way from Agra to Lahore. The emperor considered him guilty of supporting a rebel. It is said that Jahangir imposed on Guru Arjun a fine of two lakhs of rupees, which the latter refused to pay. He was consequently put to death. This was an act of indiscretion on the part of the emperor who should not have treated a holy person like Guru Arjun as an ordinary criminal. The Sikh tradition attributes the punishment to Jahangir's religious bigotry and alleges that it was accompanied by barbarous

torture. These allegations are without foundation. But the Guru's death estranged his followers against the Mughuls and led to their rebellion in the time of Aurangzeb.

Jahangir was able to suppress the revolt within a month of Khusrav's flight from Agra. He rewarded all those who had contributed to the success of the enterprise and returned to Agra. But the consequences of the rebellion of a near relative, specially a son, were not good, and led to a few risings. The first among them was that of Rai Singh of Bikaner who enjoyed a mansab of five thousand and was one of the high ranking nobles of the Mughul court. He was entrusted with the duty of escorting the royal ladies to the Panjab. He deserted his charge at Mathura, left for Bikaner without permission, and raised the standard of revolt. He captured Nagaur, and defied the imperial authority. Rai Jagannath Kachhwaha was sent against him. He defeated Rai Singh and brought him to court. Jahangir pardoned him and restored him to his mansab and dignity. A petty chief of Bihar, named Sangram, taking advantage of Khusrav's rebellion created strife. He was defeated by Jahangir Quli Khan, governor of Bihar. But the most fateful consequence of Khusrav's rebellion and consequent internal disturbances in the country was the encouragement of the Shah of Persia to make a bid for the fortress of Kandhar.

Kandhar, 1606-1607.

Owing to its strategic situation and commercial importance Kandhar was a bone of contention between Persia and India during the medieval age. It was a gate-way to India and a natural base of operations for a Persian or Central Asian invader of our country. Any one in possession of this fortress could easily surprise and capture Kabul. Hence it was considered an extremely important outpost of the government of India. Its commercial importance was no less great. Here gathered merchants from India, Persia, Turkey and Central Asia, and it connected the principal trade routes from India to Central Asia and the countries of Europe. Babur, who was aware of its dual importance, had captured it in 1522. It had, however, passed out of the hands of the Mughuls in 1558 after the death of Humayun, and the Persian monarch entrusted it to the care of Shah Husain Mirza; but Akbar recovered it in 1594. The death of Akbar and the revolt of Khusrav gave Shah Abbas the opportunity of insti-

gating the chiefs of Khurasan to attack Kandhar; but Shah Beg Khan, the Indian governor of the fortress, put up a stout defence. Early in 1607 Jahangir sent reinforcements under Mirza Ghazi to relieve the besieged Shah Beg Khan. On the approach of the relieving forces the Persians were struck with terror, raised the siege and retreated to Khurasan. Foiled in this business Shah Abbas disclaimed knowledge of the invasion, rebuked the Khurasani nobles and apologised to Jahangir. He wrote to explain that the restless border tribes had committed the mischief of their own accord and that he had punished them for their foolish audacity. Jahangir, who did not desire to re-open the quarrel, remained silent and accepted the explanation. The affair, thus, came to an end.

The emperor, however, thought it desirable to pay a visit to those parts in order to see that no such invasion occurred again. Leaving Lahore on 27th March, 1607, he entered Kabul on the 4th of June and after eleven weeks' stay there, during which he established contact with important elements in the population of that province and abolished customs dues which were charged at Kabul, he set out for Lahore in August. On the way, a plot was hatched to assassinate him on the hunting ground and to place his son, Khusrav, on the throne. The chief conspirators, besides Khusrav, were Nur-ud-din, Fateh Ullah, Sharif son of Itimad-ud-daulah, and an eunuch named Itibar Khan. Khusrav's charming manners and attractive address, combined with his blameless private life, had won him about four hundred followers. The conspiracy could not remain secret when such a large number of persons were taken into confidence. The secret leaked out, and Khurram, who got scent of it, informed Jahangir. An enquiry was immediately held and a number of letters of Itibar Khan were seized. One of the conspirators, named Mirza Muhammad Uzbeg, on being promised amnesty, revealed the entire plot. The emperor generously forgave the rank and file among the conspirators; but put four of the ring-leaders, Nur-ud-din, Itibar, Sharif, and Bedagh Turkman to death. Khusrav was blinded, but his sight was not permanently injured. After a short stay at Lahore, Jahangir returned to Agra on March 22, 1608. Khusrav was kept a prisoner in the fort. Moved by compassion, the emperor ordered his physicians to heal the vision of Khusrav's eyes. One of the eyes regained its vision. The other, however, remained uncured.

Nur Jahan.

In May 1611, Jahangir married a widow named Mehr-un-nisa who was given the title of Nur Mahal, subsequently changed into Nur Jahan, and who began exercising unbounded influence on the emperor and the administration of the empire. She was the daughter of Ghiyas Beg, a Persian adventurer in Akbar's service who was honoured with the title of Itimad-ud-daulah. A romantic legend has grown round the personality of Nur Jahan. Later writers in describing her early career have related that her parents, being forced by adversity, had to leave their home in Persia and to seek their fortune in India. They started on a perilous journey without adequate means of support on the way. The couple were in great want and their distress was heightened by the fact that Ghiyas Beg's wife was in an advanced state of pregnancy. On the way, the weary half-starved lady gave birth to a daughter. Being too weak to carry the baby, they left her under a tree and resumed their journey. They had not gone far when the mother, feeling her life unbearable without her baby, forced her husband to return to the place to pick up the child. To their surprise they found a cobra coiling round hei body and sheltering her from the sun. Ghiyas shouted aloud to scare away the cobra and picked up the child. With great difficulty they reached Lahore, where they found an old friend who introduced Ghiyas to Akbar. The emperor employed him in an ordinary capacity; but being a man of ability and intelligence, Mirza Ghiyas soon rose to be the master of the royal household. Mehr-un-nisa, the daughter, meanwhile, grew up to be a charming girl. Peerless in beauty and unrivalled in feminine accomplishments, she aspired to the conquest of the heir-apparent, prince Salim, who ardently desired to marry her; but Akbar would not agree to such an alliance. Mehr-un-nisa was, therefore, married to Sher Afgan, a Persian adventurer, like her father, who had migrated to India and entered Akbar's service. When Jahangir became king, he contrived to kill Sher Afgan and obtain possession of Mehr-un-nisa. He succeeded and had her brought to court. He married her four years later and raised her to the status of his chief queen.

This romantic tale lacks confirmation in sober history which says that Mirza Ghiyas Beg's father, Khwaja Muhammad Sharif, was the Wazir of Sultan Beghar Begi of Khurasan, a province of Persia, and a man of noble birth and liberal education. On his death, in 1587, his family lost its importance and suffered from adversity. His son,

Mirza Ghiyas Beg resolved to seek his fortune in India and, accompanied by his two sons, one daughter and his pregnant wife, left for Lahore. On the way he lost most of his money and baggage. He was, however, supported by Malik Masud, the leader of the caravan. At Kandhar his wife gave birth to a daughter who was named Mehr-un-nisa. Ghiyas Beg was introduced to Akbar by the merchant, Malik Masud, and was admitted into the imperial service. He was a man of learning and culture and soon made a mark in life. He was promoted to the rank of a mansabdar of three hundred and appointed diwan of Kabul in 1595. Mehr-un-nisa, who had grown up meanwhile, was given in marriage to Ali Quli Istajlu who was a Persian refugee in the service of Abdur Rahim Khan Khana; but was subsequently taken in the royal service. In 1509, when Prince Salim was deputed to lead an expedition against Mewar, Ali Quli was placed on the prince's staff. He killed a tiger single-handed and was given the title of Sher Afgan by the prince. Sometime after Salim's revolt, Sher Afgan deserted to Akbar. When Jahangir became king, he forgave Sher Afgan for his past conduct and appointed him faujdar of Burdwan in Bangal and granted him a jagir there (1605). Sher Afgan was suspected of treasonable designs and the emperor directed the new governor of Bangal, Qutub-ud-din Khan, who had succeeded Raja Man Singh in August 1606, to send Sher Afgan to court and, in case of disobedience, to punish him. In response to the governor's summons Sher Afgan, accompanied by two servants, reached Qutab-ud-din's camp, on April 9, 1607. He was immediately surrounded by the governor's troops. Realizing the danger he was in and the indignity to which he was subjected, he angrily enquired of Qutub-ud-din as to why he was treated in that manner. As Qutub-ud-din advanced to explain the matter, the infuriated Sher Afgan struck the governor with his sword. Qutub-ud-din's followers fell upon Sher Afgan who was cut to pieces. But before this, Sher Afgan had given a mortal blow to Ambar Khan, one of the governor's retainers. Both he and the governor died within twelve hours.

The news of Qutub-ud-din's death filled the emperor with rage. He wrote in his diary that Sher Afgan was sent to hell "and it is to be hoped that the place of this black-faced scoundrel will always be there." Jahangir had Sher Afgan's widow and daughter, Ladli Begam, brought to court. The widowed lady was appointed a lady-in-waiting to Salima Begam, Akbar's widow. Jahangir chanced to see her in one of the

Nauroz festivals in March 1611, and fell in love with her. He married her in May 1611.

Jahangir's relations with Nur Jahan.

The circumstances of the death of Sher Afgan and the emperor's marriage with this remarkable lady have been the subject of controversy, and historians have held divergent views about the incidents leading to them and Jahangir's personal share in them. Dr. Beni Prasad holds that as a prince he had never seen Mehr-un-nisa, that Akbar had not forbidden their marriage, that Jahangir had no hand in the murder of Sher Afgan and that he for the first time saw Mehr-un-nisa in March 1611. (*Jahangir*, page 152). The reasons given by the learned historian of Jahangir in support of his theory are:

(1) No contemporary Persian source supports the view that Jahangir as a prince had desired to marry Mehr-un-nisa and that Akbar had refused him permission. Nor does any contemporary Persian authority charge Jahangir with contriving the murder of Sher Afgan.

(2) None of the contemporary European travellers or missionaries has anything to say in support of the traditional story, although these foreigners were anxious to seize upon rumours of any and every scandal connected with the members of the royal family.

(3) One could not think of any motive why Akbar would have forbidden Salim to marry Mehr-un-nisa. Such marriages were common enough in those days.

(4) If Akbar had really done so, he would not have been unwise enough to place Sher Afgan on the staff of Prince Salim in 1599. If Salim had looked upon Sher Afgan as his rival in love, he would not have forgiven him (Sher Afgan) for his desertion and promoted him to a high post.

(5) The appointment of Qutub-ud-din as governor of Bangal was made in order to prevent Man Singh, with whom the new emperor was not on good terms, from commanding the resources of an important province and from exercising influence in the empire. It was not done to procure Mehr-un-nisa for the emperor. A similar step had been taken against Aziz Koka, another disaffected noble-man, a short time before Raja Man Singh's transfer.

(6) A high-souled lady of Nur Jahan's strong character would never have consented to marry Jahangir had she been convinced of his complicity in the murder of her former husband.

(7) It was natural that Sher Afgan's widow should be removed to court where her father and brother held employments. Her appointment as a lady-in-waiting on Salima Begam was also perfectly unexceptionable.

Dr. Ishwari Prasad, on the other hand, holds that it is not improbable that Jahangir as a prince loved and wanted to marry Nur Jahan, and that probably he had a hand in the murder of Sher Afgan too. He adduces the following arguments in support of the above view:

(1) The evidence furnished by Dr. Beni Prasad in support of his theory of the emperor's innocence is of a negative character and is, therefore, not strong enough to disprove the "positive assertions" of the later Indian historians who were "in a better position to state the truth in a matter like this than their predecessors."

(2) There was no definite charge against Sher Afgan who was only suspected of sedition and Qutub-ud-din was directed to punish him if he "showed any futile seditious ideas". Hence, writes Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "Our suspicions are confirmed by the suddenness with which his arrest was attempted."

(3) It is suspicious that Jahangir, who was fond of relating trivial affairs about his life, omits altogether to record the circumstances of his marriage with Nur Jahan. He mentions Nur Jahan's name for the first time three years after his marriage with her.

(4) It was strange that Mehr-un-nisa was brought to court by the emperor's orders and placed in the charge of the dowager queen Salima Begam in the imperial harem, while her father and brother were living at the capital and could have easily taken charge of her. Such a thing was never done in the case of the families of other nobles and officers who were charged with sedition.

(5) Jahangir, while a prince, seems to have loved Nur Jahan as mentioned by a contemporary Dutch writer, De Laet, in his famous work, "*Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*". The

reasons why Jahangir did not marry Nur Jahan immediately after Sher Afgan's death were that Jahangir was anxious to lull the suspicion about the circumstances leading to Sher Afgan's death and also not to provoke Nur Jahan unnecessarily. Dr. Ishwari Prasad, therefore, concludes that "the circumstances of Sher Afgan's death are of a highly suspicious nature although there is no conclusive evidence to prove that the emperor was guilty of the crime." (*A Short History of Muslim Rule in India*, pp. 465-467).

The main issues underlying this important episode are: firstly, whether Jahangir as a prince wanted to marry Mehr-un-nisa and was prevented from doing so by his father and; secondly, whether he had any hand in the murder of Sher Afgan. As regards the first, Dr. Beni Prasad's observation that "One can hardly think of any motive which would prompt Akbar to forbid a marriage between Mehr-un-nisa and Salim" does not stand the test of criticism. We know from Abul Fazl that Akbar did forbid the marriage between Salim and the daughter of the nobly-born Zain Khan Koka and allowed it only when he saw that the prince's "heart was immoderately affected". (*Akbarnama*, Vol. III, p. 1058). In the present case there was a definite reason why Akbar would not give his consent. Mehr-un-nisa had already been betrothed, as De Laet says, to Sher Afgan. That there was love between the two is also clear from the testimony of the above contemporary Dutch writer: "He (Jahangir) had been in love with her," writes De Laet, "when she was still a maiden during the lifetime of Achbar (Akbar); but she had already been betrothed to the Turk Cheer Affeghan (Sher Afgan); and hence his father would not allow him to marry her, although he never entirely lost his love for her." (*Description of India and Fragment of Indian History*, p. 181). This independent testimony of a writer who had no reason to be biased against the emperor, supports the later Muslim historians. This is confirmed by a contemporary Persian work, recently discovered by Prof. Askari of Patna, which says that Salim had made a criminal assault on Mehr-un-nisa who appealed to Akbar for justice. The emperor forbide her marriage with Salim. Our knowledge of Jahangir's personal character, such as, his falling in love with Zain Khan Koka's daughter in spite of his having already married many ladies, lends weight to the theory of his early love for Nur Jahan.

With regard to the allegation that Jahangir had Sher Afgan

murdered, there exists no definite and unimpeachable contemporary evidence. Nor can one agree that Man Singh was removed from the governorship of Bangal so that the emperor's designs could be easily executed. But at the same time there was no formulation of definite charge against Sher Afgan who was kept in the dark about his offence and was not given an opportunity to clear himself. Moreover, the suddenness with which his end was sought to be encompassed, the method employed to secure the object and the rancour which Jahangir displayed against the victim together with his omission of a mention of Nur Jahan in that connection make the episode highly suspicious. As Dr. Ishwari Prasad hints, if the love theory is correct, the motive for Sher Afgan's murder is clear.

There remains one more question to answer. If Jahangir was so anxious to obtain possession of Nur Jahan, why did he not marry her in 1607, when she was brought to court ? Why did he wait for four long years and marry her in 1611 ? It will be remembered that Nur Jahan was brought to the court and placed in charge of Salima Sultana Begam, who was Jahangir's step-mother and very kind and friendly to him. It was she who had brought about a reconciliation between Akbar and Jahangir when the latter had, as a prince, rebelled against his father. We know that ladies in the Mughul harem were clever match-makers. Therefore, while living with Salima Sultana Begam, Mehr-un-nisa was already in the possession of the emperor. The emperor's marriage with her was postponed for four years in order to lull public suspicion. This explains why Jahangir took the precaution of not mentioning the name of Nur Jahan till three years after their marriage.

Character of Nur Jahan.

At the time of this marriage Jahangir was about to complete his forty-second year, while Nur Jahan was thirty-four years of age. She still retained, and continued to do so for years together, the beauty and freshness of her early youth. She kept excellent health and was possessed of considerable physical strength. Her loveliness was heightened and improved by artificial toiletting and ornamentation. Nur Jahan was endowed with a strong intellect and quick understanding. She was highly educated and was fond of poetry, music and painting. She composed verses in Persian. She had an inventive brain and devised new dresses, ornaments and styles of fashion and decora-

tion. The fashion that she introduced continued to govern society till the reign of Aurangzeb.

Nur Jahan was pre-eminently social and generous. She was a friend of the poor and the oppressed. She had made it a rule to defray the expenses of the marriages of orphan girls and to distribute considerable charity every day. She possessed a man's brain and ambition. It was not difficult for her to master intricate political and administrative problems. She loved to dominate every situation and everybody she came in touch with. She was full of courage and bravery and never lost her balance or equanimity of temper. In fact, the greater the danger, the greater was her fortitude and resourcefulness.

Nur Jahan enjoyed great influence and authority. In 1613, she was elevated to the rank of Padshah Begam or the first lady of the realm. In that capacity she became the head of the female society of the capital and the mistress of the imperial household. She was so fond of power that she not only participated in the administration, but attempted to concentrate authority in her hands. Jahangir, who was gradually becoming accustomed to ease and sloth owing to age and indifferent health, was not averse to delegate his authority to the queen who was intelligent and hard-working and who loved him with all the intensity of her full-blooded nature. Sometimes she appeared in *Jharokha darshan* and transacted business in the open; even her name was engraved on some of the coins. Within a few years of her marriage Nur Jahan organised a party of her own and took the reins of government in her hands. The party, known as Nur Jahan Junta, consisted of herself, her parents, her brothers and prince Khurram who was the husband of her niece. Nur Jahan's mother, Asmat Begam, an educated and intelligent lady of balanced views, acted as her counsellor. Herself a woman of cultured taste and responsible for the invention of the *Itar* of roses, she exercised steadying influence on her ambitious and restless daughter. Nur Jahan's father, Itimad-ud-daulah, was an able administrator, and her brother, Asaf Khan, a financier and diplomat of note. They were hardworking and talented men, who became the pillars of Nur Jahan's party. Prince Khurram, entitled, subsequently, Shah Jahan, was married to Asaf Khan's daughter Arjumand Banu Begam. He was patronized by Nur Jahan in the early days of her power (1611-1622).

Effects of Nur Jahan's Influence.

Nur Jahan exercised healthy influence upon her husband. She looked after the emperor with unparalleled care and devotion. It was owing to her influence that Jahangir reduced the number of his daily cups and restrained himself from excessive drinking to which his two younger brothers had succumbed. She relieved him of much of the drudgery of state administration and care and anxiety which must always accompany all rulers and administrators. She successfully enhanced the splendour of the Mughul court and ably seconded the efforts of her husband in patronising learning and arts. She distributed a great deal of charity and, in more than one respect, extended protection and patronage to women. Thus her influence over Jahangir was good and benefitted especially the poor and the needy and the votaries of letters and arts.

On the other hand, her influence in political and administrative affairs and high matters of State policy was definitely injurious. Throughout her ascendancy she displayed an inordinate love for power and fondness for indulging in party-politics. From 1611 to 1622, she was the leader of the famous Nur Jahan Junta which monopolised power and shut out all those who were opposed to this party from power and influence at court. She raised her father, brother and other relatives to high posts in the empire. During this period she supported Khurram whom she raised to a pinnacle of prestige and glory. Nothing was denied to the prince, and his succession to the throne was considered a certainty; but when the most masterful queen gave her daughter, Ladli Begam, by Sher Afgan in marriage to prince Shahryar, she began to back up her son-in-law who was popularly known as *Nashudni*, that is, a good for nothing fellow. She reduced Khurram to dust and drove him into rebellion in self-defence. The result was that Nur Jahan's interference in the affairs of the State convulsed the empire in a civil war. Her love of power and disregard of loyal services rendered to the State by top-ranking officials, and her suspicion towards those who differed from her brought about an estrangement between the queen and some of the most capable and devoted servants of the Mughul throne. Mahabat Khan, who had reached the position of Amir-ul-umra by dint of meritorious services, was driven to raise the standard of revolt and to arrest the emperor, as he felt that if the imperious queen were allowed to have her own way, he would perish along with the members of his family. Possessed

as she was of womanly vanity and love of theatrical display of sovereignty, her influence in the court and in the empire produced an unhealthy result. It was the desire of all and sundry to please her by offering her rich presents which gave rise to bribery and corruption. She was, after all, a woman and could not personally supervise high state transactions. This lack of personal touch bred inefficiency, intrigue and demoralisation.

War and treaty of peace with Mewar.

With all his efforts Akbar could not conquer the whole of Mewar. Rana Pratap was able to recover a considerable portion of his lost territory before his peaceful death in 1597. His son and successor, Amar Singh, though not gifted with his father's indomitable spirit and undying love for freedom, was, nevertheless, a brave soldier and continued his ancestral policy of resistance to the Mughul aggression. Several expeditions sent by Akbar during the last days of his reign met with failure on account of the supineness of his commanders and the stiffness of the opposition offered by the Sisodias.

On his accession, Jahangir, in pursuance of his father's policy of imperialism which aimed at the conquest of the entire country, deputed, in 1605, his second son, Parwez, at the head of 20,000 horse to reduce Rana Amar Singh to submission. Asaf Khan Jafar Beg, who was promoted to the rank of 5,000 and appointed wazir, was directed to assist the prince as his adviser, and several other notable officers were ordered to co-operate with him. Sagar, an uncle of Rana Amar Singh, who had deserted his nephew and lived as a pensioner at the Mughul court, was also required to accompany the expedition. Amar Singh bravely defended his territory and fought a tough battle at the pass of Dewar which proved to be indecisive. Both sides claimed victory. The imperialists mercilessly ravaged the plain in the vicinity of Dewar, but they could proceed no further and were recalled on account of Khusrav's rebellion. Before quitting, they installed Sagar as Rana at Chittor, in order to create dissension among the Rajputs.

Two years later, in 1608, Jahangir sent another force consisting of 12,000 horse, 500 Ahadis, 2,000 musketeers, 60 elephants and 80 pieces of small artillery, under Mahabat Khan, to subdue the Rana. The Khan displayed great energy, ravaged the Rana's territory and

compelled him to seek shelter in the hills; but he could make no headway against the forest-covered hills and valleys of Mewar. In 1609, he was recalled and Abdulla Khan was appointed to take charge of the expedition. Abdulla attacked the hills of Mewar, but failed to capture the Rana. He defeated prince Karan in an engagement, but was, in turn, badly beaten by the Rajputs at Ranpura, the northern-most key-point of Mewar. He was replaced by Raja Basu, who, too, failed to produce an impression upon the Rana and was, therefore, replaced by Mirza Aziz Koka. In 1613, Jahangir personally moved to Ajmer in order to be near the scene of action and to exert pressure on the enemy. The supreme command of the Mewar army was now entrusted to Prince Khurram. The campaign began early in 1614 with vigour. But soon there were differences of opinion between the Prince and Aziz Koka. Consequently, the latter was recalled. Khurram, who had now the sole charge of the invading army, "conducted his campaign with consummate ability, ruthless severity and extraordinary good fortune". He ravaged the Rana's territory, destroyed and burnt villages, towns and gardens and demolished temples. He cut off all supplies in order to starve out the Sisodias in their mountainous retreats. Though reduced to great straits, the Rajputs displayed undaunted heroism and made repeated attacks on the enemy. In the constant struggle both sides suffered heavily; but the Rajputs suffered greater losses than the Mughuls on account of a famine and pestilence. The Rana's followers now began gradually to desert him. His nobles counselled peace. Prince Karan also advised the same course. The resources of the tiny Mewar were exhausted and it was not possible to prolong any further the struggle with the great empire whose resources in men and money were infinitely superior. Accordingly Amar Singh opened negotiations with Khurram, who offered a cordial reception to the Rana's agents, Shubh Karan and Hari Das, and sent them with his own secretary to the imperial camp at Ajmer. Jahangir was happy to accept the terms proposed by the Rana and issued a 'farman' impressing upon it the mark of his own palm and authorised prince Khurram to conclude a treaty.

Rana Amar Singh met prince Khurram and presented him a valuable ruby and some other articles, including seven elephants and nine horses. Khurram received him cordially, embraced him and, seating him by his side, honoured him with rich presents. After the Rana's departure, prince Karan paid a visit to Khurram and was

similarly received and honoured. Thus a treaty of peace was concluded between the Rana and the emperor in 1615. Its terms were :—

(1) The Rana recognised Jahangir as his suzerain.

(2) The emperor restored to the Rana all the territory, including Chittor, that had been seized by the Mughuls since the time of Akbar.

(3) The fort of Chittor was not to be fortified and not even to be repaired.

(4) The Rana was not obliged to attend the imperial darbar; but his son was to represent him and to assist the emperor with a contingent of troops.

(5) Unlike other Rajput chiefs, the Rana was not required to enter into a matrimonial alliance with the Mughul ruling family.

The treaty is a landmark in the history of the relations between Mewar and Delhi. No ruler of the Sisodia dynasty ever before openly professed allegiance to any Mughul emperor. The treaty of 1615 for the first time brought about the end of a long-drawn struggle between the two States. Jahangir and his son, Khurram, deserve credit for dictating extremely lenient terms to their foe who had fought against them and their great ancestors Akbar and Babur for over three quarters of a century. The emperor also deserves credit for adopting a most conciliatory policy and abstaining from all interference in the internal affairs of Mewar which proved useful to both parties. The Rana of Mewar hereafter remained loyal to the Mughul throne, till Aurangzeb, by his thoughtless policy, drove Raj Singh into an open rebellion. Some writers have found fault with Rana Amar Singh for not continuing the struggle and submitting to his hereditary enemy. The charge, however, is baseless. It was impossible for a tiny state like Mewar to continue the unequal struggle for an indefinite period. Mewar had to submit sooner or later, as the resources of the Mughul empire were infinitely superior. Mewar's interests required peace, and by the treaty of 1615 she got peace with honour. She retained her internal sovereignty, and all the scruples of her ruling family were respected by the victor. The Rana only nominally recognised the Mughul suzerainty. It would have been unwise for Amar Singh to have thrown away this golden opportunity of bringing the much needed peace to the distracted land.

War in the Dakhin.

Jahangir adopted his father's policy of conquering the whole of India and bringing it under the rule of his dynasty. His Dakhin policy was, therefore, a continuation of that of Akbar, who, following the ideals of the ancient Hindu kings, treated the north and south as indivisible parts of one country with a common culture and interest, and attempted to acquire the Dakhin by peaceful means, and failing that, by war. On his death, in 1605, the Mughuls possessed the whole of Khandesh and a part of Ahmadnagar. It was Jahangir's task to attempt the conquest and annexation of the rest of Ahmadnagar and, if possible, of the two remaining independent states of Bijapur and Golkunda. In 1608, he directed the Khan Khana to conquer the Dakhin and despatched him at the head of 12,000 picked cavalry. In spite of great exertion, Khan Khana could make little progress in the campaign. He was opposed by a great military genius of the calibre of Malik Ambar, an Abyssinian by birth, who had risen to be the prime-minister of Ahmadnagar. This able man had consolidated the truncated state of Ahmadnagar by a wise system of administration and liberal revenue policy and had, thus, won the goodwill of the people. He had the wisdom to employ a considerable number of Marathas in the Nizamshahi army and to encourage them to develop the guerilla system of warfare in which they were adepts and which suited the nature of the country and the genius of the people inhabiting it. Thus strengthened, the Nizamshahi government put up a brave defence against the invaders. Khan Khana was unable to maintain the morale of the Mughul troops. In order, therefore, to secure harmony and strengthen the army, Jahangir entrusted the nominal command to prince Parwez and appointed Asaf Khan as his guardian. The prince was appointed governor of Khandesh and Barar and was sent early in 1610; but he did not fare better than Khan Khana and achieved nothing during this several years' leadership in the Dakhin. One after another some of the important Mughul commanders, such as Khan-i-Jahan Lodi and Abdulla Khan, were tried, but to no purpose. Malik Ambar's Maratha guerillas evaded open pitched battles. They hung on the skirts of the Mughul army, lured it away to a place of ambush, cut off its supplies and fell on it at a convenient opportunity. These tactics, to which the Mughuls were unused, wore them out and undermined their morale. The commanders indulged in mutual accusations and thwarted the plans of their general.

In 1611, the Mughuls made a grand attempt to encircle Ahmadnagar. Abdulla Khan was to march on it from the side of Gujarat, while Khan-i-Jahan Lodi, Man Singh and Amir-ul-Umra to move from the side of Barar and Khandesh and attack simultaneously; but the scheme failed, as Abdulla Khan marched quickly towards his objective without waiting for his colleagues to proceed from Barar and Khandesh. Malik Ambar's guerillas fell on him and drove him back to Gujarat with severe losses. Jahangir was indignant. He reprimanded Abdulla Khan and reappointed Khan Khana to the Dakhin command. The Khan Khana resumed operations in 1612 and defeated the Dakhinis; but the Mughul victory was not decisive and dissension continued to hamper them as before.

Anxious to wash off the stain of a continued Mughul failure against Malik Ambar, Jahangir decided, on the advice of the Nur Jahan Junta, to transfer Prince Parwez to Allahabad and place prince Khurram in charge of the Dakhin. Early in 1616 he was granted the title of Shah Sultan and given leave to set out for Ahmadnagar. The emperor himself moved to Mandu with all his court in order to be near the scene of warfare and, thus, exert pressure by his presence. Prince Khurram reached Burhanpur in March 1617, and at once opened negotiations with Malik Ambar. Overawed by the superior force, Malik Ambar accepted the terms and ceded all the territory of Balaghat, which he had recently seized from the Mughuls. He also surrendered to the Mughuls the fort of Ahmadnagar. King Adil Shah waited in person on prince Khurram with presents worth sixteen lakhs of rupees. Jahangir confirmed the terms and the treaty of 1617 was signed. The Mughul court hailed the peace as a great achievement and exaggerated the measure of Khurram's success. The Nur Jahan Junta celebrated the occasion with pomp and magnificence, as if the prince had won a great victory. Jahangir was overjoyed and conferred on Khurram the high-sounding title of Shah Jahan. The fact, however, was that Khurram had taken advantage of Abdulla Khan's partial success and exerted pressure on the enemy by his superior force and patched up a temporary truce. Malik Ambar was not beaten; within two years he was to raise his head again.

The treaty of 1617 was brushed aside by Malik Ambar in 1620 when he formed a league with Bijapur and Golkunda and launched

an attack on Khan Khana, and besieged him in the fortress of Ahmadnagar. The imperialists, though successful in pitched battles, were powerless before the guerilla fighting of the Dakhinis and were driven back to take shelter in Burhanpur. The Dakhinis carried on raids as far as Mandu. In response to the repeated appeals of Khan Khana, the emperor directed Shah Jahan to proceed to the south and punish the audacious Malik Ambar; but, as the siege of Kangra was proceeding in the Panjab, the prince could not start for the Dakhin for some time. He insisted that his elder brother, Khusrav, should be placed in his custody. When this request was granted, Shah Jahan took leave of his father at Lahore for the Dakhin. From Ujjain he despatched five thousand cavalry under Abul Hassan and another contingent under Bairam Beg to drive away the Marathas from the vicinity of Mandu. This was done without difficulty. The Marathas were pursued as far as Khirki near Ahmadnagar, the new capital of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Shah Jahan's men now pushed on to Ahmadnagar itself in which the Mughul garrison was still holding out. When the Mughuls reached Patan, Malik Ambar offered his submission. At about the same time the Dakhinis had raised the siege of Ahmadnagar. Shah Jahan was anxious to bring the Dakhin campaign to a speedy conclusion. Owing to Nur Jahan's changed attitude towards him, he hurriedly concluded peace in 1621. The Dakhinis ceded all the imperial territory which they had seized after the peace of 1617, besides yielding some adjoining territory of the revenue of fourteen lakhs of rupees. The States of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda paid to the emperor a tribute of twelve lakhs, eighteen lakhs and twenty lakhs respectively.

The peace proved to be another feather in Shah Jahan's cap. His reputation was greatly enhanced. In August 1621, he received the news of his father's illness. A little later he contrived to bring about the death of his elder brother, prince Khusrav, by commissioning a man, named Raza, to strangle him to death, while he himself went out on a hunting excursion to aviod suspicion. A few days after the incident he reported to his father that Khusrav had died of an attack of colic. Jahangir was grieved and the whole country mourned the passing away of the prince who was possessed of great qualities of head and heart and was deservedly popular among all classes of people. The emperor, however, took no steps to punish the guilty.

Loss of Kandhar, 1622.

As we have seen, the impregnable fortress of Kandhar was a bone of contention between the two mighty empires of India and Persia which were jealous rivals. Though at peace, each endeavoured to lull the suspicion of the other so as to achieve its object. The policy of the Shah of Persia was to cajole and flatter Jahangir and to attack and capture Kandhar as soon as the Indian emperor was found off his guard. The Persians made such an attempt in 1606, but failed to capture Kandhar. Realising that naked force would not help him, Shah Abbas sent an ambassador, early in 1611, to Agra with many a rich present and a flattering letter of condolence on the death of Akbar and congratulations on the accession of Jahangir. This mission was followed by a series of others, all having the same object, namely, putting Jahangir off his guard and attacking at a convenient opportunity. The second mission came in 1615, the third in 1616 and the fourth in 1620. Towards the end of 1621, the Shah, who must have been duly informed of the break up of the Nur Jahan Junta and the growing estrangement between Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan, sent a large force for the capture of Kandhar. The siege actually began early in 1622 and there spread a rumour that another Persian army was coming to attack Thatta. Jahangir was then recouperating in Kashmir. He directed Shah Jahan, who was then in the Dakhin, to proceed to the relief of Kandhar; but the prince, who was already meditating rebellion against his father, was not in a mood to comply with the imperial orders. The fortress fell after forty-five days' siege and was occupied by the Persians. Shah Abbas sent an ambassador to Jahangir with a letter justifying the siege and capture of Kandhar on the ground that it was part of the Persian territory. The letter expressed the hope that the two empires would remain friendly. Jahangir accused the Shah of treachery and meanness and ordered prince Parwez to recover the fortress. This could not be done successfully owing to Shah Jahan's rebellion.

Shah Jahan's rebellion.

Nur Jahan's party, which had been governing the empire since 1612, began to show signs of disruption towards the end of 1621. Jahangir had wrecked his strong constitution by dissipation and indulgence in wine and opium and his health began to fail. Nur Jahan grew alarmed. Ambitious and dominating, she felt that in

the event of the emperor's death and Shah Jahan's succession, she would be deprived not only of the controlling authority, but even influence in the management of affairs. She was too well acquainted with Shah Jahan's ability, energy, ambition and pride to be deceived into the thought that he would suffer her to retain any kind of authority in matters of State. Realising that there was no room in the empire for two masterful personalities like herself and Shah Jahan, she decided to back up Shahryar, who was the youngest surviving son of Jahangir and likely to be a pliable tool in her hands. The political differences between these two powerful personages were heightened by their attitude towards religion. Nur Jahan was a liberal Shia and disposed to be tolerant to other faiths. Shah Jahan, on the other hand, was becoming more and more staunch in his belief in the Sunni dogma. He began to dislike the Persian supremacy and predominance of Shiaism at the court. In pursuance of her scheme of putting up Shahryar as a candidate for the throne, Nur Jahan betrothed her daughter, Ladli Begam, by Sher Afgan to that prince in December 1620. The marriage was performed at Agra in April 1621. Shahryar was raised to the rank of 8,000 zat and 4,000 sawar.

Unfortunately, Nur Jahan's mother, who had exerted a steady influence on her, died in 1621 and her husband Itimad-ud-daula followed her in January 1622. These two deaths led to the break-up of the Nur Jahan Junta and to the estrangement between Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan.

It was at this time that the Persians had laid siege to the fortress of Kandhar and Shah Jahan was directed to proceed to the relief of the besieged garrison; but the prince was so suspicious of Nur Jahan that he did not like to lose his hold on the Dakhin. He feared that in the event of the emperor's death, whose health was rapidly falling, the queen might proclaim Shahryar as emperor and deprive him (Shah Jahan) of what he considered to be his birth-right. He requested the emperor that he should be given the absolute command of the army and the governorship of the Punjab, and that the fort of Ranthambor should be assigned for the residence of his family. If these demands were conceded, he would proceed to Kandhar after the rainy season. Nur Jahan, who had held Jahangir in a sort of intellectual bondage, convinced him that Shah Jahan entertained seditious ideas. The enraged emperor wrote to Shah Jahan to despatch to the court

the royal officers and troops under his command immediately if he wanted to proceed to Kandhar after the rainy season. At this time occurred an unhappy incident which drove a wedge between the two parties. Shah Jahan had, a little before, applied for the grant of the pargana of Dholpur as a Jagir to him. In anticipation of the imperial sanction he sent his agent Darya Khan to take charge of it. Nur Jahan had already obtained the grant of the pargana for Shahryar and appointed a faujdar there. Darya Khan in his attempt to take possession of Dholpur came into clash with Shahryar's faujdar Sharif-ul-Malik. The latter was wounded in the eye and many men lost their lives in the battle. The queen exploited the incident. Jahangir reprimanded Shah Jahan, forbade him from attending the court and directed him to send the Dakhin army to the capital without delay. Alienated from Shah Jahan, he promoted Shahryar to the rank of 12,000 zat and 8,000 sawar and appointed him chief-in-command of the Kandhar expedition. Soon after some of the former's jagirs in the Panjab were transferred to the latter. Finally in spite of Shah Jahan's explanation and apology, his remaining jagirs in the north, including Hisar, which was supposed to be the heir-apparent's appanage, were made over to Shahryar. Suspicious of her brother Asaf Khan for his secret sympathy with his son-in-law (Shah Jahan), the queen summoned from Kabul Mahabat Khan, the greatest Mughul soldier of the day, who had so far been neglected by the court, and raised him to the high rank of 6,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. Mahabat's rival Asaf Khan was sent away to Agra to bring in the royal treasure from there.

Hardly had these steps been taken when the news came of the capture of Kandhar by the enemy. Jahangir charged the Persian Shah with treachery and ordered arrangements to be made for the recovery of that important fortress. At this time reports were received of the open rebellion of Shah Jahan who seemed to have become despaired of justice at the hands of his feeble father, then under the complete domination of the imperious Nur Jahan, and of his impending project of surprise attack on and capture of Agra before the imperialists could recover from the shock. But Nur Jahan was well-served by her spies. She took prompt and effective measures to checkmate the rebel's designs. Prince Parwez was recalled from Bihar with all his men, and the loyal Rajput chiefs of Amber, Marwar, Kota, Bundi and Orchha and other states were summoned to the support of the imperial throne.

Mirza Aziz Koka was conciliated, and Mahabat Khan was appointed to command the royal forces. The emperor and the queen proceeded to Delhi (Feb. 1623) enroute for Mandu in order to supervise the defence operations on the spot. At the same time a clever envoy was sent to sound the rebel prince so as to gain time. The emperor reached Ajmer in May 1623.

From Mandu, then his headquarter, Shah Jahan with the principal officers of the Dakhin army, most of whom were convinced of the righteousness of his cause, made a dash for Fatehpur Sikri. Having failed to capture the city as its gates were prudently closed by the commandant, the prince raided Agra, but was badly defeated in an engagement with the imperialists at Bilochpura early in April 1623. Here he suffered a great loss in the fall of his staunchest supporter Sunder, entitled Rai Rayan Bikramajit, one of the greatest generals in the country. The imperialists, after over one month's halt, set out under the nominal command of Parwez who had arrived from Bihar and had been raised to the unprecedented rank of 40,000 zat and 30,000 sawar in order to exalt him above Shah Jahan, and pursued the rebels who had by this time fled to Mandu and taken shelter in that strong fortress. On the approach of Mahabat Khan who was the real head of the imperial troops there were many desertions in Shah Jahan's ranks and he was obliged to flee to Asirgarh, leaving Bairam Beg at the head of a contingent of men to hold the ferries on the Narmada and prevent Mahabat Khan from crossing over to the Dakhin. His retreat caused defection among the imperial officers and troops in Gujarat of which too he was governor and led to the loss of that province. Shah Jahan lodged his family in Asirgarh, and himself proceeded to Burhanpur, the capital of the Mughul Dakhin. His piteous appeal to his erstwhile enemy Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar, who would not like to invite on his head the wrath of the mighty Mughul emperor for the sake of a forlorn prince, did not evoke any response and a similar request to the Bijapur ruler met with an insulting rebuff. He was forced to open negotiations with Mahabhat Khan, but in this too nothing but disappointment stared him in the face. His envoy Abdur Rahim Khan Khana whom the prince had besought to bind to his cause by personal entreaty and an oath on the Quran, went over to the side of Mahabat Khan who crossed the Narmada to overtake the fugitive Shah Jahan. The emperor issued instructions to Mahabat Khan to pursue the prince and bring him a prisoner to the court or drive him out of the country.

Shah Jahan had now no alternative but to flee across the Tapti into the territory of his former enemy, the Sultan of Golkunda (October), and the imperialists returned to Burhanpur to pass the remaining of the rainy season there. Jahangir broke up his camp at Ajmer and set out for Kashmir early in November 1623.

Passing through Telingana Shah Jahan reached Mauslipatam which he quitted (November) after a few days' halt and turning to the north-east entered Orissa, then a province of the Mughul empire. Ahmad Beg Khan, the ignorant and cowardly governor of the province failed to make arrangement for its defence and fled to Cuttack, thence to Burdwan and finally to Dacca. Salih, the spirited faujdar of Burdwan, however, decided to put up resistance; but he was defeated and compelled to surrender. After occupying Burdwan Shah Jahan pushed on to Rajmahal (then known as Akbarnagar) which was besieged and occupied only after a stubborn battle in which Ibrahim Khan, governor of Bangal, lost his life, fighting valiantly till the end. Ahmad Beg Khan, the governor of Orissa, surrendered at Dacca. The provinces of Orissa and Bangal thus passed into the hands of Shah Jahan.

With these two eastern provinces as his base, Shah Jahan planned to seize Bihar, Awadh, Allahabad, and even Agra, so as to be in a position to extort favourable terms from his enraged father. His valiant commander, prince Bhim of Mewar, made a dash for Patna and captured it without striking a blow, its pusillanimous governor Mukhlis Khan having abandoned his charge and fled to save his skin on the earliest news of the Rajput invasion. The whole of Bihar, including the formidable fortress of Rohtas, passed into Shah Jahan's hands. Jaunpur too fell in the like manner and Shah Jahan crossed the Ganga near Banaras and encamped at Kantit. He ordered the siege of Allahabad. Both Allahabad and Awadh would have been lost, had not Parwez and Mahabat Khan hastened from Burhanpur in March 1624 to the timely relief of the beleagured garrison. Their near approach obliged Abdulla Khan to raise the siege of Allahabad and retire to Jhusi. Mahabat Khan managed to collect some boats and cross the Ganga forty *kos* above Allahabad. He cut off the supplies to the rebel prince who was torn between an open battle and a retreat to the Dakhin, and compelled Shah Jahan to fight unprepared. The Mewar prince Bhim's reckless charge failed against the superior numbers of the imperial army, and he fell fighting to his last breath. A severe defeat

befell Shah Jahan who was fortunate to escape with his life. He fled to Rohtas and leaving Mumtaz mahal, who was too weak to travel after child-birth, in the fort there, retreated to Bangal.

From Bangal Shah Jahan fled back to the Dakhin, and passing through Orissa, Telingana and Golkunda, set foot on the Ahmadnagar territory. During his absence bitter hostility had broken out between Malik Ambar, the all powerful minister of Ahmadnagar, and the Sultan of Bijapur. In October 1623 each of the two had sought the assistance of the Mughul general Mahabat Khan, who had wisely refused taking sides in their quarrel as long as Shah Jahan was in rebellion, and chose to help Bijapur only after the rebel prince had quitted the Dakhin for Orissa (end of 1623). As soon as Mahabat Khan set out for the north to hound Shah Jahan out of the country, Malik Ambar, feeling relieved, concluded an alliance with Golkunda and defeated a Bijapur army at Bidar. After plundering Bidar, he besieged the Adil Shah in Bijapur. The beleagured Sultan recalled his contingent in the Mughul service and also appealed to the imperialists in charge of the Mughul Dakhin for immediate help. Afraid of being caught between the two armies, Ambar, leaving a part of his force before the walls of Bijapur, made a sudden dash and surprised the advancing reinforcements under Mulla Muhammad and Lashkar Khan in their camp at Bhatwi, slaying the one and putting the other to flight. He then besieged Ahmadnagar, the capital of the Mughul Dakhin and at the same time pushed on with the siege of Bijapur. At this juncture Shah Jahan, who had suffered a very crushing defeat in the north returned to the Dakhin, and was cordially welcomed by Malik Ambar, a life-long enemy of the Mughuls, and was persuaded to enter into an alliance with him against his father Jahangir. At Ambar's request Shah Jahan besieged the fort of Burhanpur, but failed to capture it. Meanwhile Parwez and Mahabat Khan re-entered the Dakhin in pursuit of Shah Jahan who was obliged to raise the siege of Burhanpur and retire to Rohangarh in Balaghat. Here the prince fell ill and Abdulla Khan, his only notable and faithful follower at this time, turned a hermit. Shah Jahan had now no alternative but to submit to his father.

Deprived of most of his followers by death and desertion, prostrated by physical and mental illness, and threatened by the invincible army and never-failing generalship of Mahabat Khan, nothing but destruction stared the despondent Shah Jahan in the face, and

compelled him to take an immediate decision about his future conduct. He decided in favour of an unconditional surrender and wrote to the emperor begging his forgiveness. Nur Jahan, who was becoming suspicious of Mahabat Khan's conduct and his fast raising power and prestige, was in a mood to treat and in March 1626 demanded an immediate surrender of Rohtasgarh and Asirgarh and to despatch to the court the prince's sons Dara and Aurangzeb, then aged ten and eight respectively. Shah Jahan complied without hesitation. He was forgiven and was appointed governor of Balaghat.

The three-year-old rebellion, which had convulsed the empire with a civil war and caused a considerable loss of men and money, came to an end in April 1626.

Mahabat Khan's *coup d' etat*, **March 1626.**

Immediately on the conclusion of peace with Shah Jahan, the imperious queen decided to reduce Mahabat Khan, the greatest soldier and diplomat in the empire, to submission. During Shah Jahan's rebellion Mahabat Khan's prestige had risen considerably and as he had to be employed for putting down the rebel, the queen did not then think it advisable to settle her score with him. Nur Jahan would not tolerate the existence of an indomitable personality like Mahabat Khan, who, in view of his ability and achievements, was not prepared to play a second fiddle to any one. He had his own ambition and would not like to take orders from any one except his patron and sovereign, Jahangir. He resented the usurpation of power by Nur Jahan, especially because she had been an ordinary woman before her marriage with the emperor and since that time was successfully planning to dominate the court without caring for the loyal services of the trusted nobles of the empire. Her candidate for the throne, Shahryar, was a good-for-nothing fellow and was chosen only to serve as a mere tool in the hands of his ambitious mother-in-law. On the other hand, Mahabat Khan supported the claims of Parwez who was in every way more capable a prince than Shahryar and was not prepared to accept Nur Jahan's supremacy. The queen feared Mahabat Khan's ability and his devotion to the interest of the royal family and his dislike of herself. On account of these reasons the two powerful personages felt unable to live in peace and Nur Jahan took early steps to encompass the ruin of the great general. As soon as Shah Jahan had agreed to unconditional surrender, she had Mahabat Khan transferred to Bangal and Khan

Jahan Lodi appointed in his place as adviser to prince Parwez. After some hesitation, the prince agreed to accept Khan Jahan as his Vakil and to remain at Burhanpur according to imperial instructions. Mahabat Khan also prepared to leave for Bangal.

In alliance with her brother Asaf Khan who was equally jealous of Mahabat, the queen now framed charges of disloyalty and disobedience against the latter. An imperial *farman* was issued asking him to send to court the elephants he was said to have obtained in Bihar and Bangal during Shah Jahan's revolt, and to furnish an account of the large sums of money said to have been collected by him from dispossessed jagirdars in the two provinces. If Mahabat failed to comply, he was to be recalled to court without delay. The Khan saw through the game and felt that Nur Jahan's plan was to disgrace him and to reduce him to dust. So he decided to proceed to the Panjab where the emperor happened to be at the time and represent his case personally to his master. If he failed to obtain justice, he would bring the emperor under control by a *coup de main* and thus deprive Nur Jahan of power in the state. With his 4 to 5 thousand loyal Rajput soldiers, he reached the vicinity of the imperial camp near the river Jhelum in March 1626. Jahangir had returned from Kashmir and was on his way to Kabul. He was to cross the river Jhelum the next morning. The news of Mahabat Khan's approach at the head of a powerful Rajput army caused consternation in the royal camp. Instead of making arrangements for the disbandment of Mahabat's troops, the emperor only ordered him to remain where he was, and the queen chose to hurl further insult at him, by asking him to explain as to why he had affianced his daughter to a noble man's son named Barkhurdar without the previous permission of the court. Barkhurdar was summoned to court, was publicly disgraced and with his hands tied to his neck, sent to prison. The dowry given to him by Mahabat was forfeited. Such an act drove Mahabat Khan to decide to secure the person of the emperor and strike a sudden blow at the power of the queen.

Early in the morning of the next day Mahabat at the head of his Rajputs appeared suddenly before the imperial tents, having already detached about 2,000 of his horsemen to hold the bridge on the Jhelum and not to allow anyone to pass. Most of the imperial army had gone to the other side of the river, while the emperor and the queen with a handful of men were still in camp on the left bank, waiting to

cross the river. When Mahabat appeared at the gate of the imperial encampment, the royal troops were filled with alarm, and made little or no attempt to obstruct his passage. Mahabat rode to the door of the imperial tent and there alighted from his horse. When informed of this daring act, Jahangir came out and took his seat in a palki. Mahabat stepping forward saluted the emperor and said that he had come to throw himself on his majesty's protection and to suffer any punishment that might be awarded to him in the royal presence. He did not like to die at the hands of his enemy, Asaf Khan, who was planning his destruction. As he was talking to the emperor his Rajputs surrounded the royal apartments. Jahangir in rage more than once placed his hand on the hilt of his sword to give a blow to Mahabat. But he was dissuaded from doing so. He agreed to mount a horse and accompany Mahabat after the latter had refused to permit him to go in and change his dress. The emperor was next mounted on an elephant and taken to Mahabat's camp and placed under the guard of the latter's sons.

Mahabat Khan had undertaken this *coup de etat* under an impulse, and had forgotten to take under his custody the queen who was the real power behind the throne. When he realised this mistake, he returned to the imperial camp, but found that the Begam had crossed the river to the other side and was beyond his reach. He decided to bring Nur Jahan and Asaf Khan under his control the next day.

The queen seems to have been unaware of Mahabat's coup, and was apprised of it only after she had crossed the Jhelum. She held a council of war, scolded her brother Asaf Khan for his negligence, and made arrangements for rescuing the emperor. Jahangir heard of the queen's preparations and sent messages to warn her against any such attempt which was bound to injure the imperial cause beyond recovery. He sent his own ring to assure the queen that the warning given was not under Mahabat's influence and was entirely his own. But the indomitable queen would not believe and stuck to her determination. Accompanied by a large number of troops she attempted to cross the river so as to launch an attack on Mahabat's force, but for lack of proper leadership, the party got divided into several groups, and only a small number reached the other bank. Mahabat's Rajputs were ready to give the Begam's force a fitting reception. Quite a number of them were slain, some were wounded and most fled back

and were drowned in their attempt to reach the other side of the river. Nur Jahan, seated on an elephant and leading the attack, was compelled to retire. Her elephant received several wounds and Shahryar's baby daughter in the queen's arm was also hit by an arrow. Asaf Khan behaved throughout with pusillanimity and fled to the fort at Attock for safety. A small group of loyal followers headed by Fidai Khan displayed vigour and enthusiasm and launched a vigorous attack on Mahabat's men, but these were forced back with great slaughter.

After his failure Nur Jahan voluntarily surrendered to Mahabat Khan and was permitted to join Jahangir. Mahabat Khan's supremacy was now complete. He took charge of administration, appointed his men to key positions and took steps to put down the partisans of the queen. An army was sent against Asaf Khan at Attock which secured his surrender. After about two months' stay in the Panjab, the emperor proceeded to Kabul, reconciling himself outwardly to Mahabat's domination. But the general's power rested on force and bred discontent among the members of the court. Moreover, Mahabat was primarily a soldier and diplomat, but no statesman or even an administrator. His favourites mis-managed the affairs entrusted to them and caused resentment among the people. At Kabul there was a quarrel between his Rajput troops and a section of the royal force called the Ahadis. Some Rajputs had turned out their horses to graze on the imperial hunting grounds, which was objected to by the Ahadis and the guards. In the scuffle an Ahadi was slain. The Ahadis were not satisfied with Mahabat's promise to hold an enquiry and punish the offender, and attacked the Rajputs, 8 to 9 hundreds of whom were killed. Mahabat became unpopular. The Muslim public, which disliked the Rajput influence, staged a rising. Although it was easily put down by Mahabat, his power and prestige suffered a great setback. The hostility of the court increased in the reverse proportion to the reduction in his armed strength. This gave the astute Nur Jahan an opportunity to conspire against the general. Jahangir's consummate duplicity convinced Mahabat that he was quite happy under the latter's domination and thus kept him off his guard. During the return journey from Kabul Nur Jahan hatched a plot to secure the emperor's release. It was arranged when the camp was near Rohtas that Jahangir would hold a review of the imperial troops. He sent word to Mahabat that he should order his own troops to remain at a little distance so as to prevent any possibility of a clash between the two

armies. The general, who felt the ground slipping under his feet, complied. On the pretence of reviewing the troops Jahangir placed himself at the head of the imperial army, and Mahabat, feeling that his domination was at an end, left the place for Lahore. Thus his "reign of hundred days" was over.

While retreating to Lahore, Mahabat Khan took with him Asaf Khan, one or two other important nobles and Prince Daniyal's sons, as hostages. He was compelled to send them back. Nur Jahan who had now regained her former supremacy took immediate steps to undermine Mahabat's crumbling power and to reorganise the administration that had fallen into decay on account of the general's incompetence as an administrator. Immediately after the emperor's release, a regular *darbar* was held at Rohtas and a redistribution of high offices took place. Peremptory orders were sent to Mahabat to release Daniyal's sons and also Asaf Khan and other nobles, which he did, for he felt that he had no power to oppose the imperious queen. He further complied with the emperor's commands of proceeding towards Thatta in order to face Shah Jahan who had moved from the Dakhin on the receipt of the news of Mahabat's successful coup.

The End of the Dakhin War.

When early in 1626 Nur Jahan had recalled Mahabat Khan from the Dakhin, Khan Jahan Lodi was appointed to take charge of that province. Although brave and intrepid, the latter lacked foresight and political wisdom and was no match to Malik Ambar, the king-maker of Ahmadnagar. He could make no headway against the Abyssinian minister, and allowed the imperial prestige in Southern India to suffer. But Malik Ambar died in May 1626, after which war again broke out. Malik Ambar was succeeded by Hamid Khan who too was an able commander and politician. Khan Jahan accepted a huge bribe from Hamid and made peace with him leaving Balaghat as far as Ahmadnagar under his possession. While the imperial fortune was receiving a setback in the Dakhin, Jahangir died. His Dakhin policy had failed owing to mismanagement, corruption and dissensions among the Mughul officers.

Jahangir—His Personality and Character.

After regaining his freedom from the clutches of Mahabat Khan, Jahangir, whose health had completely broken down, set out for

Kashmir in March 1627. But even Kashmir failed to help the restoration of his health. So he returned to Lahore. While he was yet on the way, he was taken ill and died early in the morning of 7th November N.S. (28th October, O.S.), 1627 near Bhimbar. He was then 58 years of age. He was buried in a beautiful garden at Shahdara near Lahore. His widowed queen Nur Jahan subsequently erected a handsome mausoleum over his grave.

There are two contradictory views about the personality and character of Jahangir. Some modern European writers considered him to have been a fickle-minded tyrant, fond of wine and women and unsuccessful both as a man and a ruler. On the other hand, some of the Indian writers looked upon him as a just and noble monarch who tried to rule with justice and impartiality. The truth lies between these two extremes. As a man Jahangir was on the whole an amiable personality. He was respectful to his mother and other elderly members of his family and although he rebelled against his great father and remained in rebellion for years, yet he had done that under a wrong impulse and on the advice of his selfish companions and eventually realised his folly and made amends after he was in possession of the throne. He cherished the loving memory of Akbar, and in thought and expression, held him in great reverence. He would walk to his mausoleum at Sikandra and rub his forehead at its threshold. He was a devoted husband, and though polygamous, he knew what it was to love a wife. He lamented the loss of his first queen, the Jaipur princess, and on her death refused to touch food and drink for four days. His devotion to Nur Jahan was thorough and bordered on subservience. For him it was unthinkable to undertake any important measure without consulting her. He was a good friend and remembered and promoted all those who had rendered him any service in his princehood, after he became king. He wished sincerely the welfare of his subjects and endeavoured to promote their material and moral interests.

Jahangir was a highly educated and cultured prince. He had mastered Persian and Turki and was acquainted with Hindi and Arabic and a few other languages. His knowledge of the Persian language was remarkable and his style atonce plain and graceful. His memoirs entitled *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri* are an excellent example of his composition. A man of great literary taste and love of poetry, architec-

ture, music, painting and other fine arts, it was remarkable that he, at the same time, had genuine interest in serious subjects like Botany, Zoology and Medicine. His autobiography is a testimony to his extraordinary knowledge of the above subjects, and above all to his great curiosity and thirst for knowledge. He was fond of the beauties of nature, of flowers and foliage, brooks and rivers, valleys and mountains. He took care to describe flowers and fruits which he came across in his tours in the country and particularly in Kashmir. His vivid account of birds and animals is nearly as accurate as that of a specialist in Zoology. Mughul painting and music reached high standards of development under his patronage. Jahangir prided himself on being a connoisseure of the art of painting and used to say that he was sure to find out as to who were the authors of various paintings, and if a picture was painted by the joint labours of a number of artists, he could tell as to who had painted the various parts of it. "As regards myself," writes Jahangir in his autobiography, "my liking for painting and practice in judging it have arrived at such a point that when any work is brought before me, either of deceased artists or the present day, without the names being told me, I say on the spur of the moment that it is the work of such and such a man. And if there be a picture containing many portraits, and each face be the work of a different master, I can discern which face is the work of each. If any other person has put in the eye and eye-brow of a face, I can perceive whose work the original face is and who has painted the eye and eyebrows." (*Jahangir's Memoirs*, Vol. II, p. 20). His court artists acquired high proficiency in portrait painting and producing exact likeness of the original. Sir Thomas Roe presented to the emperor an English miniature whose exact copy was produced by a court painter at Jahangir's orders, and when the two were placed before Roe, it was difficult for him to distinguish the original. On the contrary, Jahangir was at little pains to distinguish one from the other.

Jahangir was much interested in architecture, though it must be admitted that his contribution to the development of that art was much less than to painting. Among the notable buildings erected by him, Akbar's tomb at Sikandra is the most remarkable. He altered its design and partly rebuilt it. Itimad-ud-daula's tomb near Agra, constructed under the direction of Nur Jahan, is one of the finest buildings of its kind in the country and is adorned with mosaic work outside and paintings inside. Under Jahangir's patronage

a great mosque was built in Lahore; it rivals that at Delhi built by his son Shah Jahan.

Next to painting Jahangir took delight in laying out fine gardens. Some of the gardens in Kashmir and in Lahore were laid out at his orders. He tried to adorn the currency with fine calligraphic designs. He struck beautiful medals and coins with his portraits stamped on them.

Jahangir was possessed of a fine critical taste in matters of dress and pleasures of the table. He designed new fashions and stuffs for himself and forbade other people to make use of them. He particularly relished fine fruits. He praised the mangoes as one of the best fruits and was very fond of delicious cherries of Kabul.

Jahangir's main defects were his addiction to ease, drink and sensual pleasures, and his natural habit of falling under someone's control. His early activity gave place to indolence with the advance of age, and he left much of his work in the hands of others. As a prince he was under the influence of his boon companions and as ruler he was controlled first by the Nur Jahan Junta and subsequently by the ambitious queen herself. As he relates frankly in his memoirs, he began drinking wine from the age of 18 and gradually in nine years increased the number of his cups of doubly distilled liquor to twenty, fourteen of which he took during the day and the remaining during the night. He became so much habituated to drinking that wine ceased to intoxicate him and he changed to spirit. But he abstained from drinking on Thursday evening and from meats on Thursday and Sunday, the first being the day of his accession and the latter the birthday of his father.

It is difficult to define clearly Jahangir's religious beliefs. Sir Thomas Roe denounced him as an atheist. Some other contemporary writers called him an eclectic or a devout Muslim or even as a Christian. The fact, however, was that he was not a believer in orthodox dogmas of any religion. He was a liberal Musalman whose religious belief and practices were generally based on tolerant understanding of the principles of other faiths. A study of contemporary works including his own autobiography makes it clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that Jahangir believed in God and revered saints, Hindu and Muslim, and took delight in their company. Being unorthodox in his views, he had little sympathy with Muslim fanatics. Nor did he appreciate

modern Hinduism which believes in idolatry and incarnation. He did not seem to be convinced about Christ's parentage and crucification. He was not particular about five daily prayers and fast of Ramzan enjoyed by Islam. Although, unlike his father, he was not deeply interested in the absorbing problems of relations between man and God and life after death, he was without doubt a believer in the unity of God.

Trained in soldierly pursuits and art of warfare under the supervision of his father, Jahangir in his early youth had developed into a capable soldier. He was devoted to sport and was a skillful shot with rifle and with bow and arrow. He was given practical training in war and diplomacy and acquired a considerable experience of both, but never displayed that eneregy and devotion which are necessary in a general. In fact, except personal courage and skill in the use of arms, he lacked the genius and ambition of a commander and general. Neither as prince nor as king did he achieve a signal success in battle. He used to pride himself on the subjugation of Mewar and conquest of Kangra which had baffled his great father. But these achievements were not so much due to Jahangir's generalship as to the circumstances of the time, the weakness of his enemies and the ability of Shah Jahan and other generals. We do not notice in the pages of contemporary writers any hint of an attempt on the part of the emperor to improve training, organisation, equipment or discipline of the Mughul army. Nor did it ever occur to Jahangir to raise the morale of his men and inspire them with lofty feelings of devotion or patriotism. In fact, the military system under him suffered a little deterioration as compared with that of his great father.

Jahangir was a fairly successful ruler and administrator. He had the capacity of appreciating the needs and circumstances of the age and the good sense to continue the administrative system and policy devised by Akbar. But he was not a great constructive statesman who could initiate great administrative reforms and legislate for the good of the generation yet to be born. He did not possess high idealism and genius of Akbar. The administrative machinery of his father was allowed to remain practically untouched. The Vakil or Vakil-i-Mutlaq remained the highest dignitary next only to the emperor and so also other ministers. The essential difference between his administration and that of his father was the fact that the latter having been an un-

failing judge of human character and capability almost invariably appointed right men to right offices, while Jahangir was sometimes swayed by other considerations than the efficiency, justice and well-being of the people.

Religious policy.

Jahangir's accession had raised the hopes of orthodox Muslim theologians of the restoration of Islam to the position which it had occupied before Akbar had dis-established it as the religion of the state. They tried to convert the new emperor to their views so as to persuade him to reverse the work of secularising the state that his great father had almost completed. In the beginning this policy achieved some success, but within a few years of his accession Jahangir, who was nurtured in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of his father's court, realised the folly of playing into the hands of the *Ulema*. It was impossible for a liberal mind monarch like Jahangir to go back on the path of toleration which Akbar had opened. Nevertheless, he took greater interest in the fortune of Islam than his father had done and sometimes he tried to uphold its prestige. In the 15th year of his reign, he ordered the punishment of the Hindus of Rajauri who used to marry Muslim girls of the locality and convert them to Hinduism. Sometimes during war with Hindus, he ordered temples to be demolished, as in Mewar and Kangra. While at war with the Portuguese, he ordered churches in the empire to be closed. Sometimes, though very rarely indeed, he became guilty of acts of sacrilege. At Ajmer he ordered the temple of Varaha, the Boar incarnation, to be destroyed and the idols to be thrown into a tank. These seem to have been the result of temporary fits or impulse. On the whole, Jahangir followed the policy of toleration towards all faiths. He permitted non-Muslims to built public place of worship and allowed Hindus to visit their holy places without hinderance or charging the pilgrim's tax. He maintained Christian service at the expense of the court and paid allowance to Christian Fathers. He imposed no restriction on the public celebration of religious festivals by Hindus and himself participated in some of them, such as Vasant, Rakshabandhan and Dasehra. He used to see renowned Yogis during the night of Shivratri. Christians too were allowed to hold public celebrations during Easter, Christmas and other festivals.

Though usually liberal and tolerant towards all religions, Jahangir at times sanctioned repressive measures against Muslim heretics.

Shaikh Rahim of Lahore, who was the religious leader of a sect, was imprisoned in the fortress of Chunar. Qazi Nurullah was put to death on account of his being a notable Shia writer. Shaikh Ahmad Sarhindi was imprisoned in the fortress of Gwalior, but he was released sometime after and sent back to Sarhind with gifts.

Jahangir's relations with Sikhs were not happy. The Sikh Guru Arjun had incurred his displeasure on account of his proselytising activities and principally because he had blessed the rebel prince Khusrav. Jahangir, therefore, summoned the guru and sentenced him to capital punishment. On the intercession of some influential Hindus the capital punishment was commuted into a fine of one lakh of rupees; but Guru Arjun refused to pay the fine and was, therefore, imprisoned. He died in prison as the result of torture. Diwan Chandu Lal of Lahore who had stood surety for payment was also put to death. There-after, the emperor refrained from interfering with the Sikhs. His action against Guru Arjun was prompted both by religious feelings and by political considerations. Jahangir wrote in his diary that Arjun was converting Muslims to his religion and therefore he was anxious 'to close the shop' of the Sikh guru. After the guru's death, he wisely refrained from interfering with his followers.

Similarly, the emperor's relations with the Jains proved to be far from satisfactory. Man Singh, a leader of the Jains, had made a pro-phecy during the time of Khusrav's rebellion that Jahangir's reign would terminate within two years. The emperor was naturally angry, but as Man Singh lived under the protection of the ruler of Bika-ner, he could not take action against him. When he visited Gujarat in the twelfth year of his reign, he accused the Jains of having built temples and made them centres of disturbrance. So he issued orders for their expulsion from the imperial territories. Most of the Jains had, therefore, to leave Gujarat. Dr. Beni Prasad holds that the order was later on withdrawn. There is, however, no contemporary evidence to support such a statement. The persecution of the Jains was due partly to political and partly to religious considerations.

Like his father, Jahangir was interested in religious discussion with the followers of different faiths. He invited learned Hindu pandits and Christian missionaries, and sometimes even Muslim ulema and listened to their discourses. He was fond of the company of the Vaishnava leader Jadurup and held many discussions with him at Ujjain and Mathura,

as a result of which he came to the conclusion that the Hindu Vedanta and Muslim Sufism were almost identical. He had discourse with Mian Mir, the famous Muslim Saint of Lahore. Sometimes he made chelas after the fashion of his father. But his interest in religious discussion was not so absorbing as that of Akbar the Great.

Jahangir made no departure from his father's policy of admitting Hindus to the higher public services. In fact, he made no discrimination against any class of his subjects on the ground of religion or race as far as State services were concerned. There were three Hindu governors during his reign, namely, Man Singh, Kalyan Singh son of Todar Mal, and Vikramadit. There were many Hindus on other high posts. They were citizens of the empire in the same sense as Muslims.

On the whole, Jahangir was a successful ruler and the material condition of the people under him was good. Agriculture, industries and commerce flourished and people did not suffer from starvation. Although he did not plan great reforms for the material and moral well-being of his subjects as Akbar had done, he tried to abolish some of the social evils and took delight in doing humanitarian work. During the early years of his reign he forbade the sale and use of *bhang* and other hemp drugs and rice spirit. He also prohibited gambling. He tried to safeguard the interests of the agriculturists and made payments of compensation for the damage done to crops by his troops on the march. He also issued orders that Hindu widows should not be compelled to become *sati* without his government's permission and he tried to put a stop to female infanticide. He took delight in doing kindly acts of charity, established free kitchens for the poor and distributed money to *fakirs*. His policy was one of improving the social condition of the people without interfering with important social usages of the various communities. He sincerely desired the well-being of the public and quoted with disapproval the story of a king who had imposed a tax on gardens in his kingdom, as a result of which the quality and quantity of fruit had deteriorated, himself taking pride on the fact that he had no such greed as far as fruit gardens in his dominions were concerned. This shows how well-intentioned he was in the matter of material welfare of his subjects.

Barring a few incidents, when in a fit of rage he inflicted barbarous punishments, Jahangir was normally a justice-loving monarch. He rightly took credit for dispensing even-handed justice to all irres-

pective of birth, rank or official position. He used to say that, God forbid, he should care for nobles or even princes in matters of dispensation of justice. This was not a mere boast. His autobiography as well as writings of contemporary historians establish the fact that emperor tried to decided cases impartially. As a rule, capital punishment was awarded only by the emperor and that too sparingly. Strict instructions were issued to those responsible for carrying out royal orders that when capital punishment was awarded they should not execute his orders till sun-set. His justice was tempered with mercy.

Jahangir cannot be called a great king, nor can he be described as a statesman and administrator of outstanding calibre. He was by no means a first rate general or diplomat. But it must be admitted that he was a successful and benevolent ruler who cherished the well-being of his subjects and was deservedly popular with them. Like most rulers, he had his virtues and faults. The late Sir Richard Burn's characterisation of him is balanced and just, and deserves to be quoted. "He stands in the roll of Indian monarchs," writes he, "as a man with generous instincts, fond of sport, art and good living, aiming to do well to all, and failing by the lack of the finer intellectual qualities to attain the ranks of great administrators."

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CHAPTER VII

SHAH JAHAN (1627-1658)

Early Career, 1592-1627.

Shah Jahan was born on January 5 (15 N.S.), 1592 at Lahore. His mother was the famous Rajput princess, Jagat Gusain, daughter of Mota Raja Udai Singh. The child was named Khurram. In his childhood he was the favourite of his grand-father Akbar who loved him more than any other of his grand-children. Khurram was extra-ordinarily intelligent and smart and gave evidence of future greatness. His early education was planned and supervised by Akbar who spared no pains to bring Khurram up as a worthy member of the great Mughul ruling family. The prince displayed eagerness to learn the Persian language and literature but did not make progress in Turki. He must have acquainted himself with spoken Hindi. Although he did not write his autobiography like his father, he acquired mastery over Persian language and literature. Besides, he learnt history, politics, geography, theology and medicine. Military training formed an important part of the prince's education, and he became in due course a good soldier, adept in the use of weapons of offence and defence, and equipped with a knowledge of theory and practice of military science. While yet on the verge of manhood, he established his reputation for being one of the greatest commanders in the empire.

Early during his father's reign, Khurram was marked out for the throne. His eldest brother Khusrav lost favour with Jahangir on account of his unfilial conduct, which gave a chance to Khurram of gaining the royal patronage. In 1607 he was appointed a mansabdar of 8,000 zat and 5,000 sawar with flags and drums. In 1608 the jagir of Hisar Firoza, which was usually meant for the heir-apparent, was bestowed on him. In 1610 he was married to the daughter of Muzaffar Husain Safawi, and the next year he was promoted to the rank of 10,000 zat and 5,000 sawar. In 1612, when he had completed his 20th year, he was married to Arjumand Banu Begum, daughter of Asaf Khan. The prince's matrimonial connection with the family of

Asaf Khan who was the elder brother of Nur Jahan, led to the formation of an alliance between him, Nur Jahan, Itmad-ud-daulah and Asaf Khan. This clique known as Nur Jahan Junta ruled the empire for 10 years, during which period Khurram was looked upon as the future ruler of the country, and was promoted to the unprecedented rank of 30,000 zat and 20,000 sawar.

Khurram was employed in a series of important expeditions and his father's reign was mainly a record of brilliant victories won by this prince. One of his early exploits was his success over Mewar. In 1614 he was sent with a powerful contingent of troops against the Rana. The campaign terminated successfully and Rana Amar Singh submitted and was granted honourable terms. The victory enhanced Khurram's prestige and he was regarded as a rising star in the empire. Next he was appointed governor of the Dakhin and was given the title of Shah. The prince was able to persuade Malik Ambar to return Balaghat and surrender Ahmadnagar and other forts with the result that Khurram's successful diplomacy became an acknowledged fact in the eyes of the Mughul court. Jahangir was highly pleased and showered gift on Shah Khurram. In recognition of his success the province of Gujarat was added to his charge.

There was a sudden fall in Khurram's fortune, after he had, in alliance with Nur Jahan, ruled the empire for about 10 years. The queen who now supported the claims of her son-in-law Shahryar to succession began to entertain a dislike for Khurram and drove him into rebellion. The prince was hunted from place to place and was reduced to great misery. Eventually, he submitted to his father in 1626 and was restored to favour.

Accession, 1628.

On Jahangir's death, Nur Jahan made a final bid to retain power. She tried to imprison her brother, Asaf Khan, who was the father-in-law of Khurram and his staunch supporter, and wrote to her own son-in-law, Shahryar, to strengthen her party, increase her armed forces, and to be ready for the struggle. But Asaf Khan was an astute politician and getting wind of his sister's intention refused to see the queen. On the contrary he won over important nobles to the side of Khurram and proclaimed Dawar Bakhsh, son of Khusrav, as king so as not to leave the throne vacant. At the same time, he sent a messenger of

Shah Jahan in the Dakhin to hurry up to Delhi, as soon as possible. During the interval Khurram's rival, Shahryar, proclaimed himself emperor, seized the royal treasure at Lahore and confiscated the property of the nobles there. He recruited a large army by a lavish distribution of money. Asaf Khan who was making counter preparations on behalf of Shah Jahan, gave Shahryar battle near Lahore. The latter was defeated and taken a prisoner and blinded. Meanwhile, Shah Jahan was proceeding to the north with great speed. He was welcomed on the way by important chiefs, particularly by Rana Karan of Mewar. While yet on the way he sent secret instructions to Asaf Khan to put all the royal princes including Dawar Bakhsh, the sacrificial lamb, to death which were literally complied with by his heartless father-in-law. He arrived near Agra early in February 1628, and entered the city at an auspicious moment on 14th February. His coronation took place amidst great pomp and rejoicings, and the Khutba was read in his name. Asaf Khan was promoted to the rank of 8,000 zat and 8,000 sawar and was appointed wazir. Mahabat Khan was given the mansab of 7,000 zat and 7,000 sawar and the title of Khan Khana. Nur Jahan was given an adequate pension and allowed to spend the rest of her life peacefully in or near Lahore, where she built her husband's mausoleum, carried on the works of charity, and died in 1645.

Rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi, 1628-31.

Shah Jahan's reign was disturbed by several rebellions. The first of these was that of Khan Jahan Lodi, a capable but turbulent officer who was given charge of the Dakhin as adviser to Prince Parwez. He was an impulsive and dashing soldier and a hater of Hindus. While in the Dakhin, he accepted bribe from the Nizam Shah and surrendered Balaghat to him. On Jahangir's death he supported and allied himself with Nur Jahan. He left a small garrison at Burhanpur, his headquarters, and proceeded to the north to seize the fortress of Mandu, but he failed to do so. As Shah Jahan had already reached Ajmer in a triumphal procession and was thought likely to be the next emperor, most of the troops of Khan Jahan Lodi, particularly his Hindu supporters, melted away and he was compelled to send his humble submission. This was accepted. He was forgiven, allowed to retain his governorship of the Dakhin and ordered to return to his headquarters at Burhanpur. While in the Dakhin, he was directed to recover Balaghat which task he failed to accomplish and was therefore

recalled to court, and in his place Mahabat Khan was appointed governor of the Dakhin. At Agra, Khan Jahan remained discontented and after sometime abstained from attending the daily court. Although he was again forgiven, he continued feeling dissatisfied and made preparations to flee to the Dakhin. He was followed and overtaken near the river Chambal. There was a regular battle between the imperial army and Khan Jahan's troops, and the latter with his sons and some followers managed to cross the river, but without his women and treasure. Passing through Bundelkhand and Gondwana, he reached Ahmadnagar. He was welcomed by the Nizam Shahi Sultan and given charge of Bir and some other tracts of lands, then in possession of the Mughuls, with instructions to recover them. Khan Jahan Lodi attacked the imperialists and inflicted a defeat upon them. The situation became so menacing that Shah Jahan had to march personally to the Dakhin in December 1629. The emperor organised a comprehensive plan of action against the rebels. As he possessed an intimate knowledge of the Dakhin politics, he realised that the kingdoms of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda being jealous of each other, would not unite among themselves to repel the Mughuls. He was also aware that the Marathas were quite troublesome and it was desirable to attract them to the Mughul service by liberal offers. Keeping these facts in view he planned to send three armies against the rebellious Khan Jahan to overwhelm him from three sides. One of these under Abdul Hasan was despatched to Dhulia to command the route for supplies from the side of Gujarat and also to threaten Ahmadnagar from the north-west; the second army was posted at Dewalgaon in the south of Berar to attack the enemy from the north-east; and the third army was despatched towards Telangana to attack Khan Jahan from that side. A good number of the Marathas were employed to help the consummation of the scheme. In spite of great scarcity in the Dakhin and the neighbouring province of Gujarat due to failure of rains, a fierce war was waged. Khan Jahan was defeated and compelled to flee to Bijapur in order to take shelter in Daulatabad, but failed to get any. The imperialists pursued him and were reinforced by Shahji Bhonsle, father of the famous Shivaji, who had abandoned the Ahmadnagar service and entered that of Shah Jahan. The followers of Khan Jahan Lodi raided the imperial territory and a series of running engagements were fought. The King of Ahmadnagar who had given support to Khan Jahan Lodi now repented and turned out rebels from his territory. Khan Jahan, therefore, fled to the north and passing through

Malwa attempted to reach the Panjab in the hope that he would be joined by disaffected Afghans in north-western Hindustan. Shah Jahan was, therefore, obliged to detach a force to catch the rebel. Vikramajit, son of Jujhar Singh of Bundelkhand, who had helped the rebels to escape through Bundelkhand early during his rebellion, this time attacked the rebel and killed Darya Khan with many of his followers early in January 1631. Khan Jahan Lodi escaped, but was overtaken and killed in a skirmish at Sihonda in the modern Banda district of Uttar Pradesh.

Rebellion in Bundelkhand, 1628-29.

The next rebellion was that of Jujhar Singh, son of Bir Singh Deva Bundela, who had slain Abul Fazl at the instigation of the late emperor Jahangir, then in rebellion against his father Akbar. Jujhar Singh enjoyed a high position among the chiefs in the empire on account of favours shown to his father by the late emperor and owing to the geographical situation of his territory (Bundelkhand) and the bravery of his clansmen. On the accession of Shah Jahan, he went to Agra for royal service, leaving his son Bikramajit Singh to conduct the administration of his state. Bikramajit managed to alienate the people by his oppressive treatment and repacious collections of revenues. The new emperor ordered an inquiry into the past collections which alarmed Jujhar Singh. He returned to Orchha and began to make preparations for asserting his independence. Shah Jahan could take no action against the raja for sometime, as his attention was diverted by the raids on the frontier suba of Kabul by Jamid, chief of Trans-Oxiana. But as soon as the frontier trouble was over, Mahabat Khan was ordered to put down the rebellion in Bundelkhand. Two more armies, one under Abdulla Khan from the east and the other under Khan Jahan from the Dakhin, were sent to co-operate with Mahabat Khan in the campaign. Raja Bharat Singh, a kinsman of Jujhar Singh, coveted Bundelkhand and was persuaded to join the imperialists with his troops. Aware of the strength of the Bundelas, Shah Jahan himself hastened to Gwalior in the beginning of January 1629 in order to exert pressure on the enemy by his presence in the vicinity of Bundelkhand. Abdulla Khan attacked and captured Erachh, now in the Jhansi district, while Khan Jahan commenced ravaging Bundelkhand from the south. Jujhar Singh was thus hemmed in from all sides, and harassed by the opposition of many of his own people, he found it impossible to oppose successfully the powerful

invading forces backed by the resources of a mighty empire, and he submitted. He was pardoned (February 1629) on condition of surrendering a part of his jagirs and proceeding on service to the Dakhin.

During 1635-36, Bundelkhand was once again convulsed by Jujhar Singh's rebellion. He had served faithfully in the Dakhin about 5 years and was one of those responsible for the capture of Daulatabad. On his return to Orchha in 1634 he formed the ambitious project of conquering Gondwana, which lay south of Bundelkhand and had not yet been brought under the direct rule of the Mughuls. His main object was to make good the loss in territory he had suffered in 1629. He besieged Chauragarh in 1635 and in spite of Shah Jahan's warning, treacherously put its Raja, Prem Narain, to death. The deceased's son appealed to Shah Jahan who instead of taking steps to restore the territory in question to its legitimate heir, directed Jujhar Singh to surrender Gondwana to him, or to give up his own lands in lieu of it and also to pay a fine of 5 lakhs of rupees. Jujhar Singh refused to comply and recalled his troops under his son Jagraj from the royal service in the Dakhin. Shah Jahan was enraged and deputed Aurangzeb to suppress the rebellion. In spite of numerous difficulties, Aurangzeb stormed Orchha and proceeded to Dhamoni where Jujhar Singh had taken shelter. On this the Bundela retreated to Chauragarh. After capturing Dhamoni, Aurangzeb began his march to Chauragarh which obliged Jujhar Singh to abandon that place and retreat to the Dakhin with 6,000 men and 60 elephants and his family and valuables. The Mughuls made pursuit and Jujhar after slaying some of his women turned on the Mughuls, but was defeated. The Bundelas were scattered in various directions and Jujhar and his son, Bikramajit, were murdered by the Gonds. Their heads were cut off and sent to Shah Jahan (December 1635) who was further gratified when it was later announced that fifty lakhs of ruppes had been credited to the imperial treasury on account of spoils of the campaign. The Bundela ladies had no time to perform *jauhur* and although some of them including the venerable Rani Parbati, the widow of Bir Singh Deva, were stabbed by their males, a majority of them were taken prisoners. They were introduced into the Mughul harem to pass their days in 'gilded misery'. Two of Jujhar's sons were converted to Islam and the third was put to a brutal death because he had refused to turn a Muslim. The splendid royal temple in Orchha was destroyed and converted into a mosque, and other temples and shrines in Bundelkhand

were wantonly desecrated and demolished. Orchha was made over to Devi Singh, Jujhar's relative, who had proved traitor of his country and joined the Mughuls; but the Bundelas refused to acknowledge him as their ruler. Champat Rai of Mahoba did not submit to Devi Singh on account of his disgraceful conduct. The former's famous son, Chhatrasal, carried on for years a war of independence against the Mughuls, as a protest against Shah Jahan's policy of religious fanaticism and his unbecoming conduct towards the members of the Bundela ruling family.

Affairs in the Dakhin.

On Khan Jahan's rebellion Azam Khan was appointed to take charge of the Dakhin. He opened the campaign against Ahmadnagar and captured the fort of Dharur and besieged Parenda. But in view of peculiar difficulties in southern India, he could not make any further progress in the war. The hostility between the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur continued as before. There were conflicting views among the Bijapur officers regarding the policy to be followed towards the Mughuls, one party favouring an alliance with them while the other distrusting them as enemies. Moreover, owing to a drought supplies were not available and even grass for horses could not be procured within a range of 50 miles. But when Shah Jahan himself arrived on the scene the Mughuls succeeded in capturing the fortress of Kandhar on the eastern edge of Balaghat, clearing Berar and reducing Nasik and Sangamner. At this time Shah Jahan sustained a blow in the death of his favourite queen, Mumtaz Mahal,on January 17, 1631. She was buried in a garden near Burhanpur, but later on her remains were removed to Agra and deposited in a garden and a handsome mausoleum, known as Taj Mahal, was built over her grave.

Career of Mumtaz Mahal.

Mumtaz Mahal whose original name was Arjumand Banu Begum was the daughter of Asaf Khan, son of Itmad-ud-daula and brother of Nur Jahan. She was thus Nur Jahan's niece. She was born in 1594 and was betrothed to Khurram, then in the 16th year of his age. This marriage took place in April 1612. Hardly did any marriage in a polygamous family prove so successful as this marriage. Arjumand Banu Begum captivated Shah Jahan's heart even more than Nur Jahan had done that of Jahangir. Mumtaz Mahal shared Shah Jahan's joys and sorrows in full measure and behaved like a

devoted wife during her husband's flight from the Dakhin to Orissa, Bangal and Bihar in the course of his rebellion against his father. She bore 14 out of her husband's 18 children and remained his friend and inseparable companion till her death. Promoted to be Shah Jahan's chief queen, she was given the title of Malika-i-Zamani and the royal seal was entrusted to her custody. She died in a child-birth at Burhanpur in 1631, while Shah Jahan was conducting a campaign in the Dakhin.

Mumtaz Mahal was a highly educated and accomplished woman. She possessed natural beauty of a high order which was enhanced by artificial make-up. She possessed great natural intelligence and a tender heart. Like most well-to-do ladies in the country she took delight in doing acts of kindly charity and was particularly considerate and helpful to poor widows and orphans and the distressed. Her lady-in-waiting, Sati-un-Nisa Khanum, who was her friend and adviser encouraged and assisted the queen in her philanthropic and humanitarian endeavours. Mumtaz Mahal was a pious and religious lady, devoted to prayers, fasts and other observances enjoined by Islam. But her religious views seem to have been tinged with orthodoxy. Shah Jahan's harsh religious policy towards the Christians and Hindus is partly ascribed to Mumtaz Mahal's influence. There was hardly any Mughul queen in Indian history who was so dearly loved by her husband. The famous Taj at Agra which covers her earthly remains is the noblest monument of conjugal love and fidelity.

Affairs in the Dakhin. (*Continued*)

Meanwhile the affairs in the Dakhin went on badly. Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar, acted like a king-maker. He imprisoned the Sultan of Ahmadnagar and at the instigation of the imperial wazir, Asaf Khan, put him to death, replacing him by a member of the royal family, named Husain, then a boy of ten. On a second thought, however, Fateh Khan hesitated to submit to the Mughuls, but as Shah Jahan had sent a powerful army under Rustam Khan to reduce Daulatabad, he was alarmed and sent in his submission. Bijapur for sometime resisted the imperial offer and Shah Jahan was obliged to depute Asaf Khan to invade that state. The Mughuls captured Gulbarga and besieged Bijapur, but owing to great scarcity caused by a famine, Asaf Khan was obliged to abandon the siege,

and retreat to Miraj. Shah Jahan was disgusted. He recalled Asaf Khan to court and appointed Mahabat Khan to the command of the Dakhin army with instructions to conquer Bijapur.

During 1630-31 the Dakhin and Gujarat experienced a terrible famine. It spread over Khandesh also. Thousands of people died of starvation. The sufferings of the people were described by contemporary historian, Mirza Amin Qazwini, who wrote that hunger compelled parents to consume their own children and that powder of bones was mixed with flour and dog's flesh was eaten by the people. The famine was followed by a pestilence and led to the desolation of villages and towns; streets in the towns were gutted with dead bodies, and many people fled to northern India. Shah Jahan made arrangements to alleviate human sufferings and opened public kitchens in Burhanpur, Ahmadnagar, Surat and other places for feeding the hungry. Money too was distributed. The emperor ordered a remission of government revenue to the extent of Rs. 70 lakhs. The nobles too remitted revenues in their jagirs and must also have taken steps to relieve the suffering humanity.

War with the Portuguese.

The Portuguese had settled at Hooghly in Bangal, where they had obtained a strong footing nearly a hundred years before the accession of Shah Jahan to the throne of Delhi. With Hooghly as their base they traded with many places in India, China, Moluccas and Manilla. At their settlement they had a large number of converts and enjoyed practical autonomy. Some of the Portuguese indulged in piracy and also ravaged the rich districts of eastern Bangal. In spite of their interference with the normal life of the people in the Mughul territory, the Portuguese remained unpunished during the reign of Jahangir. On Shah Jahan's accession, Qasim Khan, the new governor of Bangal, reported that the Portuguese had fortified their settlement, levied tolls on ships and had practically destroyed Satgaon. They were also guilty of piracy and slave trade. Shah Jahan was already ill-disposed towards them for their having played false to him during his rebellion against his father. They had failed to send usual presents to the new emperor on the occasion of his accession. Their greatest fault, however, was their audacity in carrying off boats which contained two slave girls belonging to queen Mumtaz Mahal. For these reasons Shah Jahan ordered Qasim

Khan to take steps to punish the haughty foreigners. The immediate occasion for the break out of hostilities was an appeal made by a Portuguese merchant, named Afonso, to the governor of Bangal to help him in recovering a piece of land in Hooghly. Qasim Khan assembled a large force, collected boats and made an attack on Hooghly, both from the side of land and water. The attack was repulsed and negotiations were opened for peace. The Portuguese agreed to give up the slaves, but made some difficulties during the transaction. The Mughuls, therefore, made another attack and secured a footing in part of the settlement. The siege continued for five weeks and heavy artillery was brought up for bombardment. The Portuguese, therefore, felt obliged to open fresh negotiations and to pay two lakhs of rupees to the Mughuls. But no treaty could be concluded and the besieged found their position untenable and decided to evacuate the town in their boats. Before they could embark they were attacked by the Mughuls and a running fight took place. About 3,000 of the Portuguese escaped and 400 of them were taken prisoners and brought to Agra. They were asked to embrace Islam, but refused to do so and were, therefore, imprisoned. Shah Jahan's harsh policy towards the Portuguese can be justified on political grounds, for these had surely given an adequate cause for imperial resentment. But his desire to convert the prisoners to Islam was inspired by religious intolerance and, therefore, deserved condemnation.

Affairs in the Dakhin. (*Continued*)

Meanwhile warfare in the Dakhin went on in a leisurely fashion. Shahji, father of Shivaji, had submitted to the Mughuls and had been rewarded with grants of lands, then held by Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar. After Fateh Khan had, in compliance with Asaf Khan's instructions, murdered his master the Nizam Shahi king, he was restored to these lands. This enraged Shahji who offered his services to the king of Bijapur promising to take Daulatabad from Fateh Khan. Fateh Khan was alarmed and promised to make over the fortress to the Mughul general Mahabat Khan and to enter the Mughul service in person. Mahabat Khan welcomed the offer and defeated a Bijapur army, but the Bijapur general Ran Daula Khan, though defeated in the battle, persuaded Fateh Khan by a huge bribe to break away from the Mughuls. Thereupon, Mahabat Khan decided to besiege the fortress of Daulatabad, which he captured

in 1633 after a siege of three months and a half. Fateh Khan yielded up the fortress with all the guns and ammunitions of war and Mahabat Khan allowed Nizam Shahi ladies to evacuate the fort. Fateh Khan and the boy-king, Husain Nizam Shah of Ahmadnagar, were sent to court. The king was imprisoned for life in the fortress of Gwalior, and Fateh Khan was given a pension and permitted to live at Lahore. But the capture of Daulatabad did not bring about a complete extinction of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Some of its territories, such as parts of the Balaghat region, continued to remain in the hands of Ahmadnagar officers who were loyal to a sultan, who was enthroned in place of Husain Nizam Shah by the Maratha chief, Shahji. The northern half of the present Poona district and the whole of Konkan were in possession of the Marathas who under Shahji harassed the Mughuls. Mahabat Khan made arrangements for the capture of Parenda and for sending another army to force Shahji back to Junnar. In spite of his best efforts, he failed to capture Parenda and retired to Burhanpur with prince Shuja who was the nominal head of the Mughul forces in the Dakhin. Shah Jahan upbraided Mahabat Khan for this failure and the latter died in October 1634.

The recall of the Mughul troops from the Dakhin again caused confusion in the affairs of that province. Besides the Maratha depredations, there was no cessation of the intrigues at the court of Bijapur. Shah Jahan, therefore, set out early in 1636 to recommence operations and, if possible, to reduce Bijapur and Golkunda. On his arrival at Daulatabad, he sent letters to the king of Bijapur asking him to make a regular payment of tribute and to turn out from Bijapur the Marathas and other supporters of the Ahmadnagar dynasty. As these demands were not fully complied with, Shah Jahan decided to invade Bijapur and detached a force to commence operations. The Sultan was frightened, reopened negotiations and agreed to conclude a fresh treaty, the terms of which were dictated by Shah Jahan. Bijapur acknowledged the Mughul supremacy and agreed to pay an annual tribute of 20 lakhs of rupees. It further agreed to remain friendly with Golkunda and to submit its disputes with that state to the arbitration of the emperor. As a result of this treaty, the boundary of the old kingdom of Ahmadnagar was defined and Bijapur was confirmed in the possession of Parenda and the Konkan. Bijapur bound itself to assist the Mughuls against Shahji,

if the latter did not surrender the territory near Junnar and Trimbak. This treaty was signed in May 1636 and remained in force till November 1656.

Shah Jahan now turned to Golkunda. It was not difficult to settle terms with this state, as its king was more complaisant than the sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Moreover, Golkunda had shown friendship to Shah Jahan, while he was in rebellion against his father. Abdulla Qutub Khan, the new ruler of Golkunda, had sent presents to Shah Jahan, when he had appeared in the Dakhin early in 1631 to suppress the rebellion of Khan Jahan Lodi. The sultan had also refrained from assisting Bijapur while the latter was attacked by Mahabat Khan. There was, however, one obstacle to the real friendship between the two. Shah Jahan was a strict Sunni, while the Sultan of Golkunda was a Shia and recognised the Shah of Persia as his suzerain. Shah Jahan, therefore, demanded the abolition of Shia practices in Golkunda and the exclusion of the name of the Shah of Persia from the *Khutba*. The sultan complied after some hesitation and slight show of resistance. Shah Jahan's name was inserted in the *Khutba*. The Mughul troops were now withdrawn from the frontier and a fresh treaty was concluded. The terms of the treaty were that the Shia formula in the *Khutba* was to be abolished, Shah Jahan's name was to be inscribed on coins, and the *Khutba* was to be read in his name. The sultan agreed to pay an annual tribute of two lakhs of Hun, equivalent to six lakhs of rupees. He also promised to discharge all arrears of tribute and assist the Mughuls against Bijapur, if the latter declared war against the former. This treaty was concluded in May 1636.

The third problem in the Dakhin was the subjugation of the hardy Marathas who under their leader Shahji had acquired great political and military importance. On entering the Dakhin Shah Jahan despatched an army under Khan Zaman to occupy the homeland of Shahji, which was situated south and south-east of Ahmadnagar, and then to clear the Konkan of the Marathas. At the same time, a division under Shayista Khan was sent to invade the district to the north and west of Ahmadnagar. While Shayista Khan accomplished his task, Khan Zaman, who was pitted against Shahji, failed in the enterprise. Shahji had prepared to join the Bijapur army and to cross the river Bhima to be in readiness to give battle to

Khan Zaman, but the latter was ordered not to pursue Shahji. Meanwhile, peace was made between the Mughuls and Bijapur and Khan Zaman proceeded to take Junnar from Shahji. Bijapur tried to persuade Shahji to surrender Junnar to the Mughuls, but the Maratha chief refused to comply. The Mughuls, therefore, had to invest Junnar and Shahji surrendered the fortress, but not without fighting. He delivered to the Mughuls the boy whom he had enthroned as king of Ahmadnagar. This ex-ruler was sent to Gwalior to be imprisoned there. Shahji entered the service of Bijapur. For a time, the Mughuls were thus able to settle the affairs of the Dakhin to their satisfaction.

Kandhar surrendered to Shah Jahan, 1638.

For more than one hundred years the strong fortress of Kandhar had been a bone of contention between the Mughul rulers of India and the Shahs of Persia. The fortress was lost to the Mughuls during the last years of Jahangir's reign. Shah Jahan naturally was anxious to recover it at the earliest opportunity. He tried to impress the Persian monarch with his own ability and strength by receiving Persian envoys with great pomp and costly gifts, and sending exaggerated accounts of his own success against the rebels and the sultans of the Dakhin. Shah Abbas, the great Persian ruler who died about a year after Shah Jahan's accession, was succeeded by a minor, whose attention was diverted by a war with the Turks. Ali Mardan Khan, the governor of Kandhar, was not on good terms with the Persian court, as Saru Taqi, the Persian minister, had demanded from him a statement of account of the income and expenditure of his governorship and sent troops to ensure compliance. To evade this Ali Mardan Khan intrigued with the Mughul officers in Kabul and offered to surrender Kandhar to Shah Jahan. Early in 1638, he transferred his services to the Mughul emperor and admitted Indian troops into the fortress. Shah Jahan's name now appeared in the *Khutba* and on the coins in Kandhar. The district of Kandhar was occupied by the Mughul troops without much difficulty. Ali Mardan was richly rewarded and sometime after appointed governor of Kashmir.

Some minor conquests.

The Mughuls had coveted the inhospitable region known as Tibat for about a hundred years and made unsuccessful attempts to

capture it. Jahangir's expedition had been repulsed with great loss. Shah Jahan, following in the footsteps of his father, renewed the project. In 1634 he sent an expedition against Abdal, ruler of Balkistan, or little Tibat. The immediate cause of the outbreak of hostility was the offence given by Abdal, who had given shelter to the Chakks from Kashmir. Abdal submitted. But sometime after he repudiated allegiance to the emperor and therefore another expedition was sent against him, which made Abdal pay a war indemnity and surrender the leader of the Chakks. One year after, news was received that Tibat Proper was hostile and so another army had to be despatched. The Tibatians were defeated and peace was restored on the northern frontier.

Some other minor conquests were made. At the end of 1637 the region known as Baglan, now in the Nasik district, was conquered. The Portuguese were besieged in Daman and Diu and were compelled to submit. There was a rebellion in Kangara in the Panjab. Jagat Singh who was its governor had repudiated the Mughul authority, but was obliged to submit early in 1642. Champat Rai, the new Bundela chief, revolted in Bundelkhand. Abdulla Khan was directed to reduce him to submission. The Mughul army surprised the Bundela chief between Orchha and Jhansi, and although Champat Rai escaped, his adopted son Prithvi Raj was taken prisoner and sent to be lodged in the fort of Gwalior. In May 1642, Champat Rai was persuaded to submit and enter the Mughul service.

The country lying south of Ganga and east of Bundelkhand was brought under control. The chief of Baghelkhand, named Lachhman Singh, also submitted. The Cheros, an aboriginal tribe of Palamau in Bihar, also acknowledged the Mughul suzerainty. In April 1643, the Gonds and Bhils of Malwa, who were in rebellion, were suppressed.

Central Asian policy of Shah Jahan.

The Mughul emperors always cherished a desire to conquer and occupy Trans-Oxiana, their ancestral homeland in Central Asia. Babur's successive attempts had failed to recover Samarqand, the capital of his great ancestor Timur. Humayun's efforts in that direction had proved futile. Akbar and Jahangir also entertained the same ambition, but had not been in a position to make an attempt

to establish the Mughul rule in that inhospitable region. It was left to Shah Jahan to make an endeavour for the conquest of Samarqand, which was then under the Janids of Astrakhan. Shah Jahan's contemporary on the throne of Samarqand was Imam Quli, an ambitious ruler who cast covetous eyes on Kabul. Taking advantage of the confusion in India in the months following the accession of Shah Jahan, the Uzbegs under Nazr Muhammad, brother of Imam Quli, led an expedition against Kabul. He acquired partial success in the campaign; but with the advance of summer he had to withdraw, as his troops were reluctant to follow him in the inclement weather. Next year (May 1629) Nazr Muhammad repeated his raid on the Kabul territory and captured Bamian, but failed to make any further progress and had to retire. These raids on the Mughul territory naturally caused resentment in India. But Nazr Muhammad apologised and good relations were re-established between the two neighbours.

In 1639, Shah Jahan decided to retaliate and planned an expedition against the Uzbegs of Samarqand. At the back of his mind there was the ancestral ambition of re-establishing the Mughul rule over Trans-Oxiana. The occasion was furnished by confusion in the affairs of that country. Nazr Muhammad had desposed his brother Imam Quli who had lost his sight. But he was not popular and had picked a quarrel with religious leaders. The situation was further complicated when a rebellion occurred in Khwarizm or Khiva and Nazr Muhammad sent his son Abdul Aziz to quell it (1645). Abdul Aziz rebelled against his father and proclaimed himself Khan of Bukhara and Nazr Muhammad was obliged to take refuge in Balkh. These internal dissensions in Trans-Oxiana gave Shah Jahan an opportunity to interfere and thereby endeavour to realise the age-long Mughul ambition. The governor of Kabul was directed to take advantage of the difficulties of the Uzbegs. He sent an army and captured the fort of Kahmard which was however lost soon after and the operation came to an end with the advent of winter. The Mughul interference obliged Nazr Muhammad to make up his quarrel with his son, and it was agreed that he should retain Balkh, while Bukhara should go to Abdul Aziz. Nazr Muhammad even appealed to Shah Jahan for help which was promised in dubious terms. Shah Jahan welcomed the opportunity to bring Samarqand, Balkh and Bukhara under his

possession. He visited Kabul and collected a large army and planned a comprehensive campaign against the Uzbegs. Murad was given charge of the expedition. The army, however, did not start until the middle of June when the prince entered Narin and Qunduz, which were taken. The emperor's policy was to help Nazr Muhammad to recover Bukhara and Samarqand and then to wrest them from his hands. It was not difficult for Nazr Muhammad to see through Shah Jahan's designs and consequently the former tried to obstruct the advance of the Mughul army. He even pretended to agree to resign his territory to the Mughuls and declare that he was making preparations for going to Mecca. Murad guessed the meanings of these professions and began his campaign against Balkh in July 1646. On his approach, Nazr Muhammad fled and the Mughul army captured Balkh, secured a large treasure and plundered the city. The next acquisition was Tirmiz on the Oxus. After this the imperial army defeated Nazr Muhammad at Shivarghan. Nazr Muhammad fled to Marv and then to Persia. Shah Jahan was highly pleased at the success and celebrated the occasion by issuing coins at Balkh. But his joy proved to be premature, for Murad who was accustomed to a life of luxurious pleasures in India, did not like the barren country and the rigorous climate of Central Asia and begged to be recalled. The emperor was a little disappointed and resorted to diplomacy. He wrote to Nazr Muhammad that his only object in undertaking the expedition was to clear Balkh of dangerous people, and then to hand it over to him. Prince Murad had exceeded his orders, he added, on account of youth and inexperience. To Shah Abbas II of Persia he wrote congratulating him on his accession and requesting his neutrality during the Mughul expedition to Central Asia. The imperial diplomacy failed in its object. The Persian Shah did not remain neutral, and Nazr Muhammad was not deceived by sweet words. Although Murad was replaced by Aurangzeb, the Mughul army found its progress obstructed by tribesmen. Abdul Aziz had strengthened his position and collected a large army on the Oxus. As Aurangzeb arrived at Balkh, Abdul Aziz prepared to fight. Another Uzbeg army proceeded to invade Balkh from another direction. Aurangzeb was obliged to fight a pitched battle with Abdul Aziz, in which the latter was defeated. Aurangzeb's cool courage and bravery impressed the Uzbegs. The prince had dismounted from his horse and offered his sun-set prayers on the field of battle. Consequently, Abdul Aziz was in a mood to treat and

offered to place Bukhara in the hands of his brother. Nazr Muhammad wrote from Persia offering to abdicate. But the Mughul success was more illusory than real. Aurangzeb had not been able to advance beyond the Oxus. His officers were reluctant to stay and fight in the rigorous climate of Trans-Oxiana. They found the country desolate. Even Aurangzeb wanted to return to India, for he was fired with the ambition of succeeding his father as emperor. The Uzbegs, who seem to have been aware of the difficulties and sentiments of the Mughul commander and other officers, persevered on in their hostility to the invaders. Nazr Muhammad returned from Persia and attacked the Mughul out-posts in Afghanistan. He received help and encouragement from the Shah of Persia who was desirous of recovering Kandhar from the Mughuls. Aurangzeb felt obliged to cut short his progress into Trans-Oxiana and turn back to repel the Uzbeg attack on Afghanistan. Shah Jahan advised the prince to accept an apology, if Nazr Muhammad offered one. Such an apology was made by Nazr Muhammad not personally, but through his grand-son. The Mughul garrison in the out-posts slackened their vigilance under the mistaken notion that Nazr Muhammad was to be restored to his country. Aurangzeb had to return to Kabul and was harassed on the way by bands of Uzbegs.

Shah Abbas II of Persia had now openly taken up the cause of the Uzbegs. In 1648, he demanded the restoration of Kandhar from Shah Jahan. He also urged the emperor to restore Balkh to Nazr Muhammad. The Shah prepared to back his diplomacy with force and proceeded to Khurasan and besieged it. The Mughuls had already abandoned Balkh.

Loss of Kandhar, 1649.

Shah Abbas II was gratified at the failure of Shah Jahan's campaign in Central Asia, as it weakened the Mughul authority in the North-Western frontier of the Indian empire and gave him an opportunity to recover Kandhar. In 1648 the Shah, who had now attained majority, took the reins of government in his hands and made preparations for an expedition to Kandhar. Proceeding from Khurasan, he arrived in the vicinity of Kandhar and invested the fortress of Bist. The news impelled Shah Jahan to gather a strong force which was placed under the command of Aurangzeb and was instructed to proceed immediately to save the city and the fortress.

Meanwhile the Persian army captured the fortress of Bist after a short siege and then invested Kandhar itself. The garrison under Daulat Khan, its governor, lost heart thinking that no relief from Delhi was likely to arrive in time. Some of the troops in the fortress, anxious to save themselves and their families, opened correspondence with the besiegers and Daulat Khan was not powerful enough to put down the sedition with a strong hand. In fact, he himself eventually joined the dispirited garrison and surrendered the fort to the Persians in February 1649, a month before Aurangzeb was able to reach Kabul enroute for Kandhar. Shah Jahan was indignant and urged Aurangzeb to hurry up and recover the valuable frontier outpost. The emperor himself advanced to Kabul to hearten the troops by his presence in the near vicinity of the scene of action.

Accompanied by wazir Sadullah Khan the prince at the head of 50,000 troops proceeded by way of Ghazni and arrived near Kandhar in May 1649 and besieged the fortress. Fighting continued throughout the summer, but the Mughuls failed to make an impression on the besieged who were reinforced by fresh troops from Persia. The Mughul army suffered greatly for lack of proper organization and supplies and ammunition. They were further handicapped for want of big battering cannons. Winter was fast approaching and it was considered useless to continue the struggle. The emperor, therefore, recalled the expedition. Aurangzeb abandoned the siege and in September 1649 left for Lahore.

In 1652 Shah Jahan decided to renew his attempt for the recovery of Kandhar, and once again entrusted the task to Aurangzeb who was anxious to wipe off the disgrace of his defeat and failure of 1649. A powerful army with many big pieces of artillery, war elephants and camels and two crores of rupees for expenditure were placed at the disposal of the prince. The second siege of Kandhar commenced on 22nd May, 1652 and lasted for two months and ten days. The Mughul bravery proved to be of no avail before the better-served Persian artillery. Moreover, the Uzbegs threatened Ghazni which lay on the route between Kandhar and Kabul. Shah Jahan fearing a combination between the Persians and the Uzbegs ordered Aurangzeb to raise the siege and return to court. The prince's request to prolong the operations was refused and he was recalled and appointed governor of the Dakhin.

The emperor now entrusted the recovery of Kandhar to Dara who rejoiced over Aurangzeb's double failure and boasted that he would conquer the fortress within a week. The crown prince with a grand army, a huge park of artillery and one crore of rupees for his expenses set out in February 1653 and tried to occupy the surrounding country, so as to prevent the supplies and reinforcement from reaching the Persian garrison. He succeeded in recovering Bist and Girishk which lay to the west of Kandhar. He laid waste the country around, closely invested Kandhar and ordered a fierce bombardment. The concentration of attack on selected points of the rampart caused some parts of the wall to be shattered; but the Mughul army found it impossible to force an entry on account of murderous fire from the more efficient and better-served Persian guns. Nevertheless Dara's success was much greater than that of Aurangzeb during the two previous sieges and it frightened the Persians. Unfortunately, however, winter came on which put the besieged in a favourable condition. Moreover, the Mughul ammunitions and supplies ran short. It was, therefore, decided to withdraw the army early in October 1653.

The three sieges of Kandhar (1649, 1652 and 1653) sapped the resources of the empire. They cost about 12 crores of rupees without any compensating advantage. Not an inch of territory was added to the imperial dominions. In fact, the empire lost not only the impregnable fortress of Kandhar, but also a large extent of territory around it. Quite a large number of men and beasts of burden perished in the enterprise. The political and military prestige of the empire suffered greatly and revealed the inefficiency of Shah Jahan's military organisation. The Shah of Persia naturally felt elated on account of his success against the mighty ruler of Delhi and during succeeding years Persia entertained the ambition of invading the fertile plains of Hindustan which kept the Mughuls in a state of anxiety. During the remaining days of Shah Jahan's life, the relations between the two countries were very much strained.

War with Golkunda and Bijapur : Aurangzeb's Second Viceroyalty, 1652-1657.

In November 1652, Aurangzeb was for the second time appointed governor of the Mughul Dakhin. He had been in-charge of that region from 1641 to 1644, and it was, therefore, his second

viceroyalty of the Dakhin. Earnest in his devotion to duty the prince first of all tried to improve the finances of the suba and with the help of Murshid Quli Khan, his Diwan, who was a man of great administrative ability and financial genius, carried out a fresh and equitable revenue settlement. Murshid Quli Khan introduced the principle of Todar Mal's revenue system, measured the land and fixed the state demand on the basis of the produce of the soil. He realised that a uniform system for the entire country was impossible and therefore made due allowance for local tradition and usage. Side by side with *zabti*, *batai* and *nasq* were allowed to continue. The state share ranged from one-half in the *batai* areas to one-fourth in those where the system of measurement could not be introduced. These measures improved the condition of the peasants and increased the resources of the province. The prince had already brought about a redistribution of assignments of land among his officers with the permission of the emperor. He was now in a position to attend to political affairs.

Following in the footsteps of his ancestors Aurangzeb planned the destruction of the kingdoms of Golkunda and Bijapur. In view of the clear Mughul policy of extending the empire so as to embrace the entire peninsula, it was not difficult to find a pretext for an attack on these two Shia kingdoms. Golkunda was a rich state, and besides professing Shia faith, which Aurangzeb and his father considered it their religious duty to put down, the sultan had recently conquered the province of Karnatak. This conquest was not recognized by the emperor who demanded a large sum of money for the alleged crime. Moreover, Golkunda had failed to discharge its obligation of paying the annual tribute in accordance with the treaty of 1636. But the immediate cause of the war was the arrest by the sultan of Mir Jumla's son, Muhammad Amin, who appealed to Aurangzeb for assistance. Mir Jumla whose original name was Mir Muhammad Sayeed was a native of Ardistan and had come to Golkunda as the servant of a jewel merchant. After his master's death, he inherited his vast fortune. His wealth and ability attracted the attention of Abdulla Qutub Shah of Golkunda who appointed him as his prime-minister and conferred upon him the title of Mir Jumla. Mir Jumla was an extremely ambitious politician. He increased his wealth by plundering Hindu temples and working diamond mines and recruited a personal army consisting of 5,000 well-armed cavalry and

20,000 infantry, besides a powerful park of artillery and some war elephants. He conquered Karnatak for himself and defeated the Raja of Chandragiri. Thus he ruled over a dominion of his own which he converted into an *imperium in imperio*. His ambition, wealth and overbearing conduct alarmed the sultan of Golkunda who wanted to put him under arrest and blind him. Mir Jumla got wind of his designs, refused to attend the court and opened negotiations with Bijapur, Persia and prince Aurangzeb viceroy of the Dakhin. Meanwhile, his son Muhammad Amin gave offence to the sultan by his overbearing conduct in the open darbar and was, therefore, put under arrest along with his family. His property was confiscated. This happened on 1st December, 1655. Aurangzeb took advantage of the incident and after obtaining his father's permission to invade Golkunda demanded from the Qutub Shah the release of Muhammad Amin and his family and in the event of refusal threatened the sultan with an invasion of his country. Without waiting for reply the prince declared war and deputed his son Prince Muhammad at the head of a large army in January 1656 to invade Golkunda. As this army advanced within his territory, the sultan made profession of obedience and released Mir Jumla's son and mother. Aurangzeb now demanded the release of Mir Jumla's property and marched on Hyderabad. The sultan was alarmed; he removed his treasures to the strong fort of Golkunda a few miles from Hyderabad, made an attempt to bribe Prince Muhammad and got together his troops to defend his territory. The prince, however, defeated the Golkunda army and besieged Hyderabad. He put the sultan's agents who had brought him the bribe in the shape of jewels and other valuables to death and captured Hyderabad after a short siege. The helpless sultan made fresh professions of allegiance, sent to the prince more jewels and other valuable articles and released the property of Mir Jumla and at the same time sought assistance from Bijapur in order to defend his strong fortress of Golkunda from the invaders.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had besieged the fortress of Golkunda (February 1656). The siege lasted for some time and the sultan Abdulla Qutub Shah was frightened and begged permission to send his own mother to beg pardon for his offence. The aged lady pleaded forgiveness, whereupon Aurangzeb promised to restore the kingdom of Golkunda to her son on condition that he should clear all arrears of tribute, pay an indemnity of one crore of rupees and give his

daughter in marriage to Prince Muhammad. While negotiations were going on in the Dakhin, the sultan's agents were waiting on Shah Jahan at Agra through Dara and Jahanara. Consequently, when Aurangzeb was about to press the siege, he received orders from his father to withdraw from Golkunda and pardon the sultan. Aurangzeb kept the emperor's orders secret and continued the siege and raised it only after the sultan had restored Mir Jumla's property and promised to clear off the arrears of tribute and to perform the marriage of his daughter with Muhammad. Mir Jumla interviewed the prince and was received with honours. The marriage of the sultan's daughter with Muhammad was also celebrated and a dowry of ten lakhs of rupees was given. A fresh treaty was entered into with Golkunda. The sultan swore on the Quran never to disobey the Mughul emperor in future and was thereupon pardoned. He was to pay an indemnity of 15 lakhs of rupees. By this treaty the sultan became a vassal of the Mughul emperor. Mir Jumla who was the primary cause of the humiliation of his master was given an honourable post in the Mughul service and after the death of wazir Sadullah Khan was promoted to be the prime-minister of the empire.

After his success against Golkunda, Aurangzeb turned his attention towards the kingdom of Bijapur which had enjoyed peace for 20 years and was treated virtually as an independent state. Its ruler Muhammad Adil Shah was an able monarch and had the foresight to maintain friendly relations with the ruler of Delhi. He had extended his territory from sea to sea, consolidated his administration and increased his revenue. His success excited the jealousy of Shah Jahan who rebuked him for his presumptuousness. The sultan who was not prepared to go to war with the emperor tendered an apology and gave up the display of court ceremonials of the Mughul type responsible for Shah Jahan's reproofs. Adil Shah died in November 1656 and was succeeded by his son Ali Adil Shah II, then a boy of 18.

The change of government in Bijapur caused confusion in its affairs. Factions arose at the court and a rebellion broke out in the eastern province of the kingdom. Aurangzeb took advantage of these developments and successfully intrigued to win the allegiance of some of the disaffected Bijapuri nobles. He obtained Shah Jahan's permission to invade Bijapur on the plea that Ali Adil Shah II was

not the son of the late ruler, but was a boy of spurious origin. Being an independent kingdom, the Mughul emperor had no right to interfere with the internal affairs of Bijapur, much less to question the succession of its ruler. Aurangzeb's interference with that kingdom was, therefore, wanton aggression, pure and simple. His object was the complete subjugation of that independent kingdom.

Assisted by Mir Jumla who possessed local knowledge, Aurangzeb invaded Bijapur and besieged the fortress of Bidar, situated on a rocky eminence and well-supplied with arms and ammunition. Sidi Marjan, the commandant of the fort, put up a brave resistance, but the besiegers succeeded in filling the moat round the fortress and damaging its walls by a fierce bombardment. Fortunately, for Aurangzeb a rocket caused an explosion in the fort as a result of which Sidi Marjan was mortally wounded. The Mughuls now made a dash into the fortress and put up their flags on its ramparts. The dying commander sent the keys of the fort to the prince. The fortress thus passed into the possession of the Mughuls after a siege of 27 days.

After this success Aurangzeb sent forward Mahabat Khan at the head of 15,000 well-equipped cavalry to meet the Bijapur army which had assembled at Gulburga. The Bijapuris were defeated and dispersed, and Aurangzeb was able to advance to Kalyani, the ancient capital of the Chalukyas, situated forty miles west of Bidar. The town was besieged, but the Mughuls were stoutly opposed and their lines of communication were threatened. Eventually, Aurangzeb's superior generalship and perseverance succeeded in inflicting a defeat on the Bijapur force, and capturing Kalyani by assault in August 1657. The prince was preparing to undertake further operations with a view to bring about the extinction of the Bijapur kingdom when the emperor's orders to call off the campaign arrived. The importunity of the Bijapur agents at the Delhi court, Dara's jealousy of Aurangzeb and the emperor's failing health were responsible for Shah Jahan's decision to recall the army to the headquarters. In compliance with the imperial orders negotiations were commenced and terms were quickly settled. The sultan agreed to pay an indemnity of one and a half crores of rupees and to surrender to the empire the forts of Bidar, Kalyani and Perenda and also those in the Konkan and Vangi. Shah Jahan approved of

the settlement and was generous enough to remit half a crore of the indemnity. Aurangzeb withdrew to Bidar and began preparations for the war of succession which was about to ensue on account of Shah Jahan's failing health. The sultan of Bijapur took advantage of the change in the political situation and declined to fulfil the terms of the treaty of 1657.

While Aurangzeb was conducting his campaign against Golkunda and Bijapur, the Marathas who had so far not proved dangerous to the Mughuls, were emerging into importance. Their young leader Shivaji, son of Shahji Bhonsle, was at this very time entering upon a career of conquest and independence. Shahji was obliged to enter the service of Bijapur and Shivaji also promised to help the Mughuls in their war against Bijapur in return for a part of the territory which had to be conquered from that kingdom. But as the Mughuls did not assist him in conquering it, Shivaji avoided joining them, and while Aurangzeb was occupied with the two Dakhin kingdoms, he captured Junnar and raided the Mughul territory west of Ahmadnagar. Aurangzeb was obliged to make arrangements for putting down Shivaji's raids on his western flank. A detachment of the Mughul army defeated Shivaji. Nevertheless, the latter continued raiding the Mughul territory. When Aurangzeb made peace with Bijapur and withdrew his army from that state, Shivaji also abandoned his raids and made peace with the Mughuls and submitted to them.

The War of Succession, 1657-1659.

Shah Jahan fell ill in September 1657 and rumour spread that he was dead. Believing that his death was approaching, he executed his will bequeathing the empire to his eldest son Dara, who was called upon to conduct the administration in the name of the emperor during the latter's illness. The emperor's other sons, however, being apprised of their father's illness, decided to contest for the throne. Shah Jahan had four sons, Dara Shukoh, Shah Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad Bakhsh. All these were grown up men and governors of provinces with considerable resources and following. Dara, at the time of his father's illness, was governor of the Panjab and Delhi, but he usually resided with his father who had removed to Agra in October 1657 for a change of climate. Shuja was governor of Bangal, Aurangzeb that of the Dakhin and Murad

of Gujarat. Though born of the same mother the brothers were not on good terms and each of them coveted the throne. The three younger princes were jealous of Dara who was designated heir-apparent by the emperor and marked out for succession to the throne. He held liberal religious views, was friendly to Hindus and popular with the Rajput aristocracy. Shuja had leanings towards Shiaism, while Aurangzeb was a staunch Sunni and bitterly hostile to non-Muslims. Murad, though a Sunni like Aurangzeb, was more or less indifferent to religious dogma.

When the rumours of the emperor's fatal illness reached the princes, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad began making preparations for a war against Dara who was at Agra by the side of his ailing father. Murad in Gujarat was the first to murder his minister Ali Naqi to assume the title of emperor and to strike coins in his own name. Shuja who for many years had ruled Bangal with success, proceeded towards Agra at the head of a big army to fight Dara and occupy the throne. Both these entered into correspondence with Aurangzeb who was clever enough to conceal his intentions and projects which were to overpower all his brothers and seize the throne for himself. With consummate cunning, he tried to make use of Shuja and Murad to further his own interest. While keeping in touch with the developments at the imperial court at Agra, through his trusted agents and specially his sister Raushanara, he posted his troops at the ferries on the Narmada so as to prevent news of his own preparations and movements reaching northern India. With the help of Mir Jumla, whom he did not allow to proceed to Agra, Aurangzeb began making preparations, winning over officers and troops and gathering other materials of war. Unlike Murad he was not prepared to break openly with his father or elder brother. He announced that he was preparing to proceed to Agra to see his ailing father and tried to conciliate Golkunda and Bijapur and even to win them over to his interest.

Aurangzeb entered into correspondence with Murad, advised him to act cautiously and not to break out into an open revolt. He found fault with Murad for besieging Surat and assuming the title of king. The two brothers entered into an agreement that they would unite to put down Dara who had become an apostate from Islam and after their victory would divide the empire between them;

the Panjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir and Sind would go to Murad, while the remaining country would pass into the hands of Aurangzeb. It was further agreed that one-third of the booty would belong to Murad and two-thirds to Aurangzeb. The brothers were to march out of their provinces, effect a junction with their troops, and proceed to Agra to fight Dara.

While Aurangzeb and Murad were concerting measures for a war against Dara, Shuja in Bangal was carrying out his coronation at Raj-Mahal. This done, he started for Agra at the head of a large army and reached Banaras early in February 1658. Dara whose plan was to crush Murad and Shuja and then to march against Aurangzeb, despatched his eldest son, Sulaiman Shukoh, with Raja Jai Singh of Amber to deal with Shuja. The two armies met on 24th February, 1658 at Bahadurpur, five miles north-east of Banaras, and fought a hotly contested battle in which Shuja was defeated with great slaughter. He left the field and fled towards Bangal. Jai Singh pursued Shuja to the border of Bangal.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb had matured his plan. He secured his object by converting Golkunda and Bijapur into his friends and offering Shivaji grants of lands in the Dakhin. He sought to distract Dara's attention by inciting the Persian Shah to invade Afghanistan, then a province of the Indian empire. By February 1658, his preparations which included employment of European gunners in his service were completed. He left Aurangabad and after a month's stay at Burhanpur, crossed the Narmada and reached Dipalpur where he was joined by Murad. The two princes then proceeded to Dharmat, 14 miles south-west of Ujjain.

On the news of the advance of his brothers from the Dakhin and Gujarat, Dara sent an army under Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Qasim Khan to meet them and, if possible, to persuade them to return to their respective provinces. The imperial army suffered from the divided command and lack of intelligence, and failed to produce the desired impression on the rebellious princes. Aurangzeb sent a message to Jaswant Singh asking him to withdraw, as his proposed visit was only to see his father. The latter replied by advancing towards Aurangzeb's army. It was then that he learnt that Murad had joined Aurangzeb. It was too late to talk of peace

and a battle was fought at Dharmat on 25th April, 1658. The Rajputs under Jaswant Singh attacked the rebel forces with bravery, but failed to win the battle, as the imperial troops were badly organised and led. Many of Jaswant Singh's officers lost their lives and he himself was wounded and was forcibly removed from the field by his trusted followers. In the army commanded by Qasim Khan, only one high Muslim officer lost his life and four of them went over to the side of Aurangzeb on the next day. It is said that when Jaswant Singh reached Jodhpur, his spirited queen refused to admit him into the castle for it was un-Rajput-like for the head of the Rathors to have fled from the field for the sake of saving his life.

After his victory at Dharmat which enhanced Aurangzeb's prestige, he laid the foundation of a new town near the site of the battle and named it Fatehabad. He then proceeded toward Gwalior en-route for Agra, crossed the Chambal and arrived at the head of a powerful force at Samugarh, a village eight miles east of Agra Fort, to give battle to his victorious brothers. The crown prince was badly upset by the news of the disaster of Dharmat and the quick advance of Aurangzeb to the vicinity of Agra. Dara, therefore, made a vigorous attempt to collect as many troops as he could and with Shah Jahan's permission to proceed in person to decide the contest for the throne one way or the other. His advance guard was under his trusted Rajput nobles, while his right and left wings were commanded by Khalilullah Khan and Siphir Shukoh, Dara's younger son respectively. Dara himself seated on a lofty elephant, took up his position in the centre which he commanded in person. As usual the prince's army was handicapped for want of harmony among its various parts and on account of Aurangzeb's intrigue to seduce its Muslim commanders.

Dara committed the mistake of not launching an immediate attack on Aurangzeb whose troops were exhausted on account of continuous marching and postponing battle for the next day which gave the enemy troops time to recoup themselves by rest during the night. When the battle began the next day (June 8, 1658), he ordered his guns to waste their fire, for Aurangzeb's troops had not arrived within range. The imperial left wing launched an attack on Aurangzeb's right which the latter, who had reserved their fire, succeeded in repelling. The next charge was made on the enemy

centre, which was taken on itself by Aurangzeb's reserve, which in turn defeated the imperial left wing killing its commander, Rustam Khan. The right wing of Dara commanded by Khalilullah, who seemed to have been in collusion with the enemy, made a half-hearted attack on Murad. His attempt was seconded by the Rajputs from the centre. They pushed on to Murad's division and attacked him with vigour. Murad received three arrow wounds in the face and his driver fell dead before him. Murad was ultimately forced back and the Rajputs advanced further and made an attack on a group of troops commanded by Aurangzeb in person. The Rajputs were defeated, but Aurangzeb was so much impressed by their bravery and devotion, that he refrained from making a short work of his brave though beaten opponents. While his right wing was thus being pushed out of the field, Dara was proceeding to reinforce his left wing, whose commander Rustam Khan had fallen on the field. From the centre he moved to the front of his right wing, with the result that he came in front of his own artillery, which had consequently to be silenced. As he was drawn to one corner of the field, he lost touch with the operations in other parts. Aurangzeb who had reserved his fire now ordered his artillery to play on Dara. While the enemy guns were moving forward to encircle him, Dara found his heavily armed troops exhausted by the heat of the summer and himself on a huge elephant a target of Aurangzeb's guns. On the advice of his officers he dismounted from his elephant and took his seat on a horse. From the empty *howda*, his troops thought that he was dead. They were exhausted by fighting as well as extreme heat and they now broke and fled for safety. Dara was dismayed and escaped on horse-back, losing 10,000 of his troops in the battle. Besides these, quite a good number perished from heat or exhaustion. On arrival at Agra he was so much struck by shame that he declined to meet his father and taking his family and a handful of followers, he left for Delhi in order to gather an army there and make a fresh attempt to oppose his victorious brothers.

The astute Aurangzeb ascribed the victory to Murad, had his wounds dressed and declared that the latter was now the emperor whose reign should begin immediately. The brothers now marched towards Agra and encamped outside its wall. Most of the imperial nobles and officers abandoned the losing side and went over to join the victorious princes. Shah Jahan invited Aurangzeb to a meeting.

At first, he agreed to see his father, but being suspicious by nature, he feared an amush and so declined to meet Shah Jahan. He occupied the city and posted his troops round the fort. Afraid of his life Shah Jahan closed the gates of the fort and prepared to defend it. Aurangzeb laid siege and ordered his guns to batter the fort walls, but the fire proved ineffective as the fort was almost impregnable by assault. Not being in a position to lose time Aurangzeb cut off the fort's water supply from the Yamuna so as to compel his father to surrender. The wells inside the fort contained brakish water and caused distress to the imperial family and garrison. Shah Jahan was compelled once again to appeal to the filial sentiments of Aurangzeb and to impress upon him the desirability of making up the quarrel. Aurangzeb replied that he was loyal to him. Shah Jahan, therefore, opened the gates of the fort and allowed Prince Muhammad, eldest son of Aurangzeb, to take charge of it and clear it of the old emperor's adherents. A meeting between Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb was arranged through Jahanara and Shah Jahan proposed that the empire should be divided between the four brothers. Aurangzeb started to enter the fort and meet his father, but he returned from the way as his officers intercepted a letter from Shah Jahan to Dara which convinced him that his father was at heart on the side of Dara and against him. The father and the son never met, and Aurangzeb after holding a pompous darbar started in pursuit of Dara, leaving Agra in charge of Muhammad.

While on the march towards Delhi, a coolness sprang up between Aurangzeb and Murad, as the latter feeling that he was being ignored by the former, who to all intents and purposes was acting as the sole ruler, began enlisting fresh troops to strengthen his position. Aurangzeb who was a past master in the art of intrigue and ruthlessness, craftily advanced some money to Murad in order to assist him in pursuing Dara and invited him to a feast. After some days' hesitation Murad accepted the invitation on the advice of one of his officer who had been seduced by Aurangzeb's gold. When the dinner at which he was served with wine was over, Aurangzeb requested Murad to take rest as he was tired after the hunt. A maid-servant was sent to shampoo Murad's legs in the tent where he was taking rest. This lulled him to sleep and the woman servant removed Murad's weapons from his side. Aurangzeb easily made him prisoner and sent him to be lodged in the fort at Delhi.

Murad's troops were won over by bribe and persuaded to join Aurangzeb's army. This took place near Mathura.

During this interval Dara who had failed to recruit a sufficiently large army at Delhi to fight the victorious Aurangzeb, abandoned the imperial city and retreated to Lahore, thinking that he would strengthen his position there and oppose Aurangzeb's advance. He left some of his men to guard the ferries on the Sutlej and to furnish him news of the enemy's movements. He thought that Aurangzeb's army was fatigued and would not be in a position to proceed to Lahore in time to overtake him. He was mistaken. Aurangzeb relieved of his anxiety about Murad, proceeded to Delhi and occupied it. From there he sent two forces, one to Lahore to pursue Dara and the other towards Allahabad to fight Sulaiman Shukoh, Dara's eldest son and his own brother Shuja. At Delhi he assumed the title of emperor and carried out his coronation. Shah Jahan's reign thus came to an end. The ex-emperor passed the remaining days of his life as a prisoner in the fort at Agra. He was imprisoned in the guilded-marble palace which he had built and from where he could have a view of the Taj Mahal which was then under construction.

Aurangzeb had now practically won the war of succession. Dara was in fight from Lahore where he could not rally opposition to his victorious brother. From Lahore he proceeded to Gujarat and was well-received at Ahmadabad by the governor of that province. With ten lakhs of rupees placed at his disposal by the friendly governor, he raised a fresh army and made other preparations for a final struggle with Aurangzeb. He was invited by Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and accordingly hastened to Ajmer, but was extremely disappointed to find that the Rajput chief had already been won over by Aurangzeb through the intercession of Jai Singh of Amber. The new emperor had sent an army to overtake the fleeing Dara, who was compelled to fight at the pass of Deorai near Ajmer and was once again defeated and had to take refuge by flight. He returned to Ahmadabad, but this time the governor refused to admit him into the town. Dara had no alternative but to turn to Afghanistan. He took shelter at Dadar with a Baluchi chief, Malik Jiwan, whom he had once saved from Shah Jahan's wrath. Dara's wife Nadira Begum, who had faithfully shared her husband's misfortune, accompanied him in his dangerous flight and was then ill, died at Dadar

and the prince, himself, who had passionate attachment for her, was almost on the verge of death on account of his sad bereavement. Malik Jiwan treacherously betrayed the prince into the hands of Aurangzeb's men. He was taken captive along with his second son Siphir Shukoh and taken to Delhi and delivered into the hands of Aurangzeb on September 1, 1659. Aurangzeb was highly pleased and disgraced his elder brother by seating him in dirty attire on a filthy elephant and parading him in the streets of Delhi and then throwing him into a dungeon. Aurangzeb's court was divided on the punishment to be imposed on the exalted captive. Danishmand Khan wanted his life to be spared, whereas Shayista Khan and his own sister Raushanara urged that being a *Kafir*, he should be put to death. Aurangzeb instituted a special tribunal presided over by the high ulema to try Dara for apostacy. He was found guilty and beheaded. His eldest son Sulaiman Shukoh who had taken shelter in Garhwal was captured, brought to Delhi and sent as a prisoner to the fort at Gwalior. He died there as the result of slow poisoning. The victor's next brother Shuja who had fled to Mungher after the battle of Bahadurpur, was defeated by Aurangzeb at the battle of Khajwah, in the Fatehpur district in Uttar Pradesh. Shuja once again fled to Bangal and then to Arakan. He was murdered by the Meghs. Murad, the youngest brother, who was lodged as a prisoner in the fort of Delhi, was put to death. Aurangzeb thus became the undisputed ruler of the country.

Last days of Shah Jahan, 1666.

Shah Jahan lived a prisoner in the Shah Burj of the Agra Fort for eight years. Though he was allowed all comforts in the prison and was attended by his favourite daughter Jahanara, he was very closely watched and not allowed any access to the people outside. Nor was he permitted to correspond with anybody or allowed to see any one except in the presence of Aurangzeb's agents. Aurangzeb coveted the royal jewellery in the possession of his father which the latter refused to part with. A bitter correspondence ensued between the father and the son and Aurangzeb blamed him for his partiality towards Dara and asked him to submit with resignation to the Divine will. The captive ex-emperor was deeply offended by the reproaches hurled on him by his undutiful son and in anger called Aurangzeb a robber and usurper. He even described him as a hyprocrite. A keen edge was added to

Shah Jahan's suffering on account of the brutal murder of Dara and Murad and equally unfortunate fate of Shuja. He began passing his time in meditation and prayer. He fell ill in January 1666 and after having made his will he died on January 31 (N.S.), 1666 at the age of 74. It is said that he kept on gazing at the Taj Mahal till his last moment. Aurangzeb did not allow his father's funeral to be performed like the funeral of a king and Shah Jahan's bier was carried by eunuchs and menials. He was buried by the side of Mumtaz Mahal in the Taj Mahal at Agra.

Personality and Character: Was his reign a Golden Age?

Historians hold diametrically opposite views about the character and achievement of Shah Jahan. The late V. A. Smith was of the opinion that Shah Jahan failed both as a man and as a ruler and that the dazzling splendour of his court and the remarkable beauty of his buildings, specially of the Taj Mahal, misled the world into thinking that his reign was a golden period in the medieval history of India. Contemporary Indian historians and a few European travellers, on the other hand, looked upon Shah Jahan as a great and successful monarch, who ruled over the subjects as a father over his sons, and that the condition of the country under him was prosperous and people were happy. Neither of these views is absolutely correct.

Shah Jahan's personality and character had two facets. He was partly liberal and progressive and therefore in that sense a real successor of his father and grand-father. On the contrary, in certain other respects he resembled his son Aurangzeb and anticipated some of his measures. In that respect, he was without doubt a reactionary. Smith is right when he says that Shah Jahan was not a dutiful son. He revolted against his father and for years remained in rebellion. But it must not be forgotten that he was forced into that course of action on account of the jealousy of his step-mother Nur Jahan who, as we have seen, was bent upon making the throne safe for her own son-in-law Shahryar. Moreover, the rebellion by the Mughul princes against their fathers had become more or less traditional. It is, therefore, unjust to single out Shah Jahan for blame on that account. He was an ambitious and energetic prince and was determined to succeed his father and prepared to resort to any kind of means to

attain his end. Similarly, Smith's contention that he could not be praised as a husband for he disgraced himself after the death of his favourite queen Mumtaz Mahal, disregards the character of the generality of the Mughul princes who were polygamous and therefore not very faithful to conjugal love. Moreover, it can be rightly said in his favour that he remained true to Mumtaz Mahal for twenty long years. As a father he showed undue preference for his eldest son and failed to keep control over his family. Although as a private gentleman he was generally kind and merciful to the poor and the suppliant, he did not display those qualities of friendship and kindliness which characterised his ancestors, like Babur, Akbar and Jahangir who would weep and would not touch food for days on the loss of a friend or a relative. Whereas his ancestor Humayun was so reluctant to punish his ungrateful brothers, Shah Jahan ordered all his innocent male relatives to be put to death so that he might have no danger to face from any one of them. Barring these acts of selfishness, Shah Jahan possessed all the qualities of a cultured gentleman. He was learned and accomplished, polite and attentive in conversation, and was gifted with a sweet disposition and kingly looks. He was fond of literature and fine arts, such as, music and painting, and above all architecture. Like his grand-father Akbar, Shah Jahan encouraged men of letters and arts and was surrounded by them at court and camp. He extended patronage not merely to Persian, but also to Sanskrit and Hindi. Abdul Hamid Lahauri, the court historian, tells us that Jagannath Pandit, the famous author of *Ras Gangadhar* and *Gangalahri*, was the poet laureate of Shah Jahan and the emperor used to listen to his composition and bestow upon him royal gifts and favours. Kavindra Acharya Sarasvati of Banaras who was equally proficient in Hindi and Sanskrit and other Sanskrit scholars adorned his court, and under imperial patronage produced several works of merit. Hindi poetry was not neglected. Besides Sundar Das, entitled Mahakavi Rai, the famous Hindi poet and author of '*Sundar Sringar*', '*Singhasan Battisi*' and '*Barahmasa*' and the personal friend and confident of the emperor, Chintamani the greatest Hindi poet of the time, enjoyed the royal patronage. Shah Jahan had faith in astrology and many Hindu astrologists were employed for casting horoscopes of the members of the royal family and for fixing auspicious hours for marriages, military expeditions and other important undertakings. Shah Jahan continued the Mughul practice of celebrating at the court the Hindu festivals of

Vasant and Dasehra, and weighing his person (tuladan) against gold, silver and other precious articles and distributing these among Brahmans, dervishes and other religious people. He also maintained the tradition of employing Hindus on high posts. In this respect, therefore, Shah Jahan followed in the footsteps of his father and grandfather.

Shah Jahan was a better soldier and general than his father. Active in body and mind he personally planned and undertook military expeditions until his old age. He reorganised the army and made it a better fighting force. In spite of this, he failed to recover Kandhar from the Shah of Persia and his three costly sieges of that frontier stronghold produced no result save disappointment and considerable loss of men, money and prestige. His Central Asian expedition met with no better fate. With all his martials, activity and ambition, the military condition of the Mughul empire under him was definitely weaker than under Akbar.

Shah Jahan's reign has been described as a golden period in the medieval history of India. This is true in one respect only and that is in the domain of art, particularly architecture. Shah Jahan's buildings represent the climax in the evolution of the Mughul architecture in this country. The Red Fort with its white marble palaces and Jami Masjid at Delhi, the Moti Masjid, Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas and some other fine buildings in the Agra Fort and the famous Taj Mahal, besides many other buildings at several other places, are the best examples of Indo-Muslim architecture. The exquisite peacock throne with a canopy supported on twelve pillars adorned with precious jewels, built in seven years and the celebrated Koh-i-Nur added to the pomp and magnificence of his court. Music, vocal and instrumental, made great strides under Shah Jahan's patronage. Lavish attention was bestowed on painting, but, according to critics, it deteriorated in taste and originality. There was great progress in literature, both Persian and Hindi, but there were no master writers of the calibre of Abul Fazl in Persian or Sur Das and Tulsi Das in Hindi. Sanskrit too flourished and was patronised. Thus, Shah Jahan's reign made an extraordinary contribution to the development of literature and art. But it must be noted that while it surpassed the previous reigns in architecture, it failed to compete with Jahangir's contribution to painting and Akbar's to literature, Persian, Hindi and Sanskrit, and to music and sculpture.

Shah Jahan was a capable administrator and statesman. His genius was orderly rather than inventive. He attempted to systematise the administration, particularly the military organisation known as the mansabdari system. He tried to reduce the high salaries of the mansabdars and compelled them to maintain in their service the exact number of troops prescribed for their several ranks. In this he succeeded to a great extent. The main regulation issued by Shah Jahan in the twentieth year of his reign was that a mansabdar who held a jagir in India, must maintain one-third of the troops indicated by his rank; one who held jagir outside India was required to maintain one-fourth the number of his rank. In the case of the latter, the number was a little later further reduced to one-fifth. Under Shah Jahan the highest mansab open to an officer was 9,000 zat and 9,000 sawar, which was held by his father-in-law Asaf Khan, but the princes held higher ranks. Dara's mansab, for example, was 40,000 zat and 20,000 sawar. He increased the land revenue to 400 millions of rupees a year by enhancing the state demand from one-third to one-half of the gross produce of the soil. He abandoned Akbar's *zabti* system and framed out the revenue of seven-tenth of the empire, reducing thereby the *Khalsa* land, that is, the land under the direct management of the government. The burden of the cultivators increased considerably not only because they were now to pay one-half of their gross produce but also because they were required to pay for all the land in their possession and not as before for the land under actual cultivation. The condition of the tillers of the soil who formed 75% of the country's population became definitely worse than it was under Akbar or Jahangir.

Shah Jahan maintained his ancestral tradition of personally administering justice. He was stern in punishing the oppressors and dispensing even-handed justice. In spite of his religious orthodoxy and policy of rack-renting the peasantry, the emperor retained his popularity among the masses. Hard-working and meticulously careful in the discharge of his administrative duties, Shah Jahan used to get up early in the morning and appear at the Jharokha Darshan at sun-rise and to spend like his grand-father most of his time in attending to the business of the state. His daily routine has been described by the great historian, Sir Jadunath Sarkar, in his '*Studies in Moghul India*' which shows that despite his fondness for magnificence and pleasures of life, Shah Jahan was a hard-worked ruler.

Yet during his reign were sown the seeds reaction which became eventually the main causes of the downfall of his dynasty and the destruction of his empire. His religious bigotry and intolerance anticipated the reactionary reign of Aurangzeb. His persecution of heretics in Islam made the Shias feel that they were unwelcome at the imperial court. His fondness for money impelled him to increase the burden of the people and caused suffering among them. His love of presents accorded sanction to a pernicious custom of guilded bribery. The offering of *nazars* and presents became common not only at the royal court and camp, but also in the households of imperial nobles and officers and became responsible for a great deal of corruption in administration. His display of pomp and magnificence extorted money from the unwilling masses and classes, and his sensual tastes set a bad standard of public and private morality.

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CHAPTER VIII

AURANGZEB (1658-1707)

Early Life.

Muhi-ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb was born on 3rd November, 1618 (N.S.) at Dohad near Ujjain, while his grandfather Jahangir was returning from the Dakhin to Agra. During his father's rebellion, Aurangzeb had to suffer great hardship and along with his elder brother Dara was made over to Nur Jahan as a hostage after Shah Jahan had submitted and was forgiven. On account of these difficulties his regular education began at the age of 10 and he was then placed under the charge of able teachers. He was a very intelligent and keen student and mastered the Quran and Hadis. At an early age he became a good scholar of Arabic and Persian, and learnt Turki and Hindi as well. While he took to the study of theology with great zest, he did not care for painting, music and other fine arts. His military education, which formed part of the curriculum, was not neglected and Aurangzeb soon became a fine soldier. At the end of 1634, he was appointed a mansabdar of 10,000 zat and 4,000 sawar. Then he was given charge of the Bundela expedition against Jujhar Singh of Orchha, which was his first experience of war and diplomacy. Next, he was appointed governor of the Dakhin which office he held from 1636 to 1644. Here he acquired reputation as a good soldier, administrator and diplomat. On 18th May, 1637, he was married to Dilras Banu Begum, daughter of Shah Nawaz, a member of the Persian ruling family. In May 1644, Aurangzeb was compelled to resign his governorship of the Dakhin on account of his differences with his elder brother Dara. In February 1645, he was forgiven and appointed governor of Gujarat, which charge he held till 1647 when he was directed to undertake an expedition to Balkh. Despite his qualities as a general, Aurangzeb failed to conquer Trans-Oxiana and was recalled to court and appointed governor of Multan which office he held from 1648 to 1652. During this period, he was commissioned to recover Kandhar, but his two sieges of that fortress in 1649 and 1652 proved unsuccessful.

Shah Jahan was greatly annoyed and transferred him to the Dakhin in 1652. The prince thus held the viceroyalty of southern India for the second time from 1652 to 1658.

Throughout his career as a governor, Aurangzeb displayed administrative capacity of a high order and devotion to duty, but, at the same time, he exerted greatly in organising a powerful party for winning his father's throne for himself. Being a bigoted Sunni, he imbibed a dislike for the Hindus, particularly the Rajputs, and openly insulted them by a policy of religious intolerance. In the Dakhin, he was on the point of conquering the kingdom of Bijapur and Golkunda when the rumours of Shah Jahan's illness and death reached there and obliged him to make preparations for participation in the war of succession. How he won the contest against his brothers and finished them off one by one has been described in the previous chapter.

Coronation.

After the capture of Agra, the imprisonment of his father in that fort and disposing of the claims of Murad Bakhsh for the sovereignty, Aurangzeb went through hurried ceremony of accession at Delhi on 31st July, 1658, assuming the title of Abul Muzaffar Muhi-ud-din Muhammad Aurangzeb Bahadur Alamgir Padshah Ghazi. But as he had to pursue Dara and settle his scores with Shuja, he postponed the customary celebration and rejoicing. After his victories of Khajuwa and Ajmer, the new emperor entered Delhi in a grand procession on 15th May, 1659. There in Shah Jahan's grand palace his coronation ceremony was held with great pomp and splendour. The emperor took his seat on the peacock throne at 3 hours 15 minutes from sunrise on 15th May, 1659, the hour fixed by astrologers. Prolonged rejoicings were observed and the emperor grudged no expenditure to make the occasion go down to history as one of the grandest coronations ever celebrated by a Mughul monarch. Grand feasts and large-scale illuminations were held and many nobles and officers were promoted and new appointments made.

Early Measures: Religious intolerance.

Aurangzeb took steps to repair the ravage done by the prolonged war of succession which had also thrown the administration out of gear and caused misery throughout northern India. First

of all, the new emperor established order and gave peace by bringing the governors and other important officers under proper control. Next, he gave much needed relief to the people by abolishing many illegal taxes, the most important of which were inland transport duty (*rahdari*) and octroi (*pandari*) which were levied on articles of food and drink that were brought for sale in the cities. In the crown lands alone these taxes involved a loss of royal revenue to the extent of 25 lakhs of rupees. The third category of taxes abolished was the *abwabs* or miscellaneous taxes levied over and above the regular land revenue and customs duty. Although abolished again and again by the previous rulers, these had reappeared time after time. The important *abwabs* were duties on the local sale of all articles of consumption, licence tax on various kinds of trade, gifts and subscriptions exacted by officers and fees and commissions realised for the state. Besides, there were certain special taxes on the Hindus, such as pilgrim's tax, tax on throwing the bones of dead Hindus into the Ganga and a tax on the birth of a male child. These were abolished by Aurangzeb's orders. Although the abolitions must have been respected in important cities, most of these taxes must have continued to be realised (as Khwafi Khan says) from the people in the distant provinces.

As the champion of Sunni orthodoxy, Aurangzeb issued a number of ordinances to make the Muslims conform to the orthodox rules of conduct as taught by the Quran. He gave up the practice of inscribing the *Kalima* on the coins. Next, he discontinued the observance of Persian New Year's Day, as it was un-Islamic, and forbade the cultivation of *bhang* throughout the empire. He appointed censors of public morals (*muhtasibs*) in all important cities to enforce the Quranic law and to put down drinking, gambling and prostitution. The *muhtasibs* were also required to see that Muslims prayed five times every day and kept the fast of Ramzan. One of their duties was to punish those who were found guilty of blasphemy and also heretics in Islam. The emperor punished the Sufis for holding liberal religious views akin to elastic pantheism. Sarmad who was an associate of Dara was put to death on the charge of heresy. Many Shias were similarly beheaded for abusing the first three Khalifas and so also many converts to Islam who were suspected of having reverted to their old faith. The most important section of the Muslim population that suffered bloody persecution at the

hands of the new emperor was the Ismailia or Bohra community of Gujarat.

Conquests.

Aurangzeb's first conquest was that of Assam which was ruled over by a Mongoloid dynasty. During the war of succession the rulers of Cooch-Behar and Assam had seized the Mughul district of Kamrup which was situated between their kingdoms. Aurangzeb appointed Mir Jumla as governor of Bangal and directed him to recover the Mughul territory. After a short campaign, Mir Jumla captured the capital of Cooch-Behar and annexed that to the kingdom. Then he proceeded to invade Assam which was under the Ahoms who were a branch of Shan race and had established their rule over eastern and central Assam in the 13th century. The Ahoms, after a slight fighting, retreated to the Brahmaputra and Mir Jumla defeated them in a naval battle on March 13, 1662, and occupied the Ahom capital Garhgaon, where he acquired a valuable booty. He established a garrison in the Ahom capital. But the Mughul occupation of Assam proved to be precarious, for during the rainy season the country was flooded, communications were cut off and the Mughul outposts were isolated. Thousands of Mughul soldiers perished from starvation as no provision could reach them, and the Ahoms captured some of the Mughul frontier outposts and cut off communications between the Mughul army and navy. They attacked the Mughuls but were defeated. Nevertheless, the Mughul position became almost untenable and Mir Jumla, worn out by exertion and unhealthy climate of Assam, died on 10th April, 1663. Shayista Khan was now appointed governor of Assam. In 1663 he captured Chatgaon and drove away the Portuguese from the delta of the Brahmaputra. He even defeated the raja of Arakan. The Mughuls held Assam for four years longer, but the Ahom king Chakradhwaj recovered all his lost territories. He even captured Gauhati. The Mughul frontier was thus pushed back to the river Monas. In 1679 the Mughuls recovered Gauhati, but it was again lost two years later. Thus Kamrup ceased to be a part of the Mughul empire. But after much fighting the raja of Cooch-Behar finally accepted the suzerainty of the Mughuls.

The next important work that engaged the attention of the governor of Bangal was of putting down the pirates (the Portuguese),

o constantly plundered Bangal, carried off the people and sold them as slaves at the Indian ports. Shayista Khan built a fleet of 300 vessels called flotilla, conquered the island of Sandwip and captured Chatgaon which was made the headquarters of a Mughul commandant. He released thousands of Bangali peasants who were slaves in the hands of the Portuguese.

Several minor conquests were made during the first half of Aurangzeb's reign. In 1661 Daud Khan, governor of Patna, conquered and annexed Palamau in southern Bihar. The Mughul suzerainty was established over the ruler of little Tibat or Ladakh where for the first time a mosque was built.

A few rebellions occurred during the first half of the reign but they were easily suppressed. Champat Rai of Bundelkhand, driven by injustice done to him and his predecessors in Orchha, unfurled the flag of revolt, but he was eventually compelled to submit in 1661. In 1663 Rai Singh of Nawanagar in Kathiawar who had revolted was obliged to submit. Rao Karan Singh of Bikaner openly defied Aurangzeb's authority, but later apologised and was forgiven. There was a fierce rising of the Jats in Mathura and Agra districts and of the Sikhs in the Panjab which continued for a long time. Barring these North India remained undistributed and enjoyed internal peace during the first twenty-five years of Aurangzeb's reign.

War with the frontier tribes.

Though a champion of Muslim orthodoxy, Aurangzeb had to wage wars with equally fanatical Muslim tribes of the north-western frontier region. The Afghan tribes who live in that territory have always followed highway robbery as their profession. Their country being arid and unproductive, they find it profitable to plunder the inhabitants of the plains and the traders whose way lies from Afghanistan into India and through the passes in the frontier. The Mughul emperors found it difficult to conquer and tame the tribesmen by force and consequently they bribed them in order to maintain peace and to keep the routes in the frontier open to peaceful traffic. For this purpose Aurangzeb paid the border chiefs 6 lakhs of rupees annually, but the policy of bribing the frontier chiefs did not always succeed, for fresh leaders arose amongst the tribesmen and they often resorted to plundering the Mughul territory. In 1667 Bhagu, a

leader of the Yusufzai clan of the Swat and Bajaur districts north of Peshawar, set up a pretender, entitled Muhammad Shah, as the king of the clan, crossed the Indus near Attock and invaded the Mughul district of Hazara. Other bands of Yusufzais plundered the Attock and Peshawar districts and attempted to hold the ferry on the Indus at Harun to prevent the Mughul army from crossing into the tribal area. They were defeated by Kamil Khan, the commandant of Attock in April 1667. Another commander, Shamsher Khan, crossed into the Yusufzais territory and defeated the tribesmen. In September the emperor despatched Muhammad Amin Khan to punish the Yusufzais. The hard blows that he inflicted compelled the rebels to keep quiet for some years.

In 1672, however, there was another revolt in the frontier region. The Afridi chief Akmal Khan crowned himself king, declared a holy war against the Mughuls and summoned all the Pathans to join him. The rebels attacked Muhammad Amin Khan, governor of Afghanistan, at Ali Masjid. The Mughul army was defeated, but Muhammad Amin escaped leaving all his camp and property including his women who were carried into slavery by the victorious Pathans. This success fired the ambition of the tribesmen and the rising spread throughout the entire frontier region. The rebels were joined by the gifted Khushal Khan of the Khattak clan, who inspired the rebels by his soul-stirring poems. Aurangzeb appointed Mahabat Khan as governor of Afghanistan with instructions to put down the rebellious Pathans, but the new governor arrived at a secret understanding with the rebels and consequently the Khybar route remained closed. The emperor was displeased and sent Shujaat Khan to punish the rebels, but he was defeated and killed on March 3, 1674.

The situation now became so menacing that Aurangzeb was obliged to proceed to Hasan Abdul near Peshawar. He stayed there for a year and a half to direct the operations. Mahabat Khan was removed from the governorship and a fresh army was sent to fight the Pathans. The emperor also had recourse to diplomacy. He offered government posts to tribal chiefs and bribed them with money. The result was that while some of the clans accepted the imperial offers and submitted peacefully, the others, like Ghorai, Ghilzai, Shirani and Yusufzai who rejected the imperial offers, were

defeated and crushed. The imperial commander, Uighur Khan, played prominent part in crushing the rebellious Afghans and established such a reputation for bravery that the Afghan mothers hushed "their babies to sleep with Uighur Khan's dreaded name". By December 1675 the frontier was almost quiet and the emperor, therefore, left Hasan Abdul for Delhi. He appointed Amir Khan governor of Kabul. By tact and diplomacy and friendly relations with the Afghans the new governor succeeded in quietening them and keeping the routes open to traffic. His success was in no small measure due to the ability and advice of his wife Sahibji who was a daughter of Ali Mardan Khan. He remained governor of Kabul till his death in 1698.

Amir Khan's policy of paying subsidies to the tribal chiefs and sowing dissensions among them proved successful and led to the break-up of the Afghan confederacy under Akmal Khan, on whose death the Afridis submitted and made peace with the emperor. Khushal Khan Khattak, however, continued the war for some years more. He was, however, betrayed by his own son and was captured and imprisoned. The frontier war then came to an end. But it proved a very costly war. Besides draining the imperial resources in men and money, it diverted the Mughul attention from the Marathas whose king Shivaji turned the opportunity to his advantage and conquered Karnatak without being checked by the Mughuls.

Aurangzeb's ideal of kingship.

Aurangzeb believed in the Islamic theory of kingship and sovereignty which enjoins the ruler to enforce the Quranic law in the administration of his state and to convert his country from a heathen land into the land of Islam. He was convinced that his immediate ancestors on the throne of Delhi had committed a grave error in disregarding the Quranic law and in attempting to conduct the administration on secular lines. Akbar had dis-established Islam as the religion of the state and had abandoned the Islamic theory of kingship and substituted it by the Hindu ideal of sovereignty. It was, therefore, Aurangzeb's policy to do away with the innovations introduced by his great ancestor. Accordingly from the beginning of his reign he took steps to champion the cause of Sunni orthodoxy. He restored Islam to its former position as the state religion and

placed the entire resources of the empire at the disposal of the missionary propaganda of his faith. He made it the chief aim of his life to put down *kufr* (polytheism) and to carry on *jihad* (holy war) for transforming India, which in his eyes was an infidel country (*darul-harb*), into the realm of Islam (*Dal-ul-Islam*) by attempting to convert her people into Muslims and conducting her administration in strict accordance with the Quranic law. As long as the entire country could not be conquered and the entire population therein could not be made to embrace Islam, he would impose political, economic and social disabilities on the non-Muslims, so as to remind them every day of their inferiority and to force them to abandon their ancestral religion and become converts to the Muslim faith.

First of all, the new emperor restored Islam to its original position as the religion of the court and the country. Next he undertook to re-establish the Muslim law of conduct by abolishing non-Muslim innovations. He removed the Kalima from the coins, abolished the celebration of the Persian New Year's Day, forbade the cultivation of *bhang* and appointed *muhtasibs* (religious censors) in all the important cities to enforce the Quranic law. He forbade music at his court, gave up the ceremony of weighing the emperor's person (tuladan) against gold, silver and other precious articles on his birthday, and also appearing at sun-rise at Jharokha Darshan. Hindu astrologers were dismissed from the court, though Muslim astrologers were retained and continued to be consulted by the emperor. He forbade the old temples to be repaired and a little later issued an order to the governors of the provinces "to demolish the schools and temples of the infidels and put down their teaching and religious practices strongly". The *Muhtasibs* had to go round and destroy Hindu temples and shrines within their jurisdictions. "So large was the number of official temple-breakers that a daroga (superintendent) had to be placed over them to guide and unite their activities." Even the universally respected old temples of Vishwanath at Banaras, Keshav Dev at Mathura and Somnath at Patan were razed to the ground. Even those in the states of friendly Hindu rajas, such as Jaipur, were not spared, and the destruction of temples and images were "often accompanied by wanton desecration, such as slaughtering of the cows in the sanctuary and causing the idols to be trodden down in public quarters".

On April 12, 1679 the emperor promulgated an order re-imposing *jizya* on Hindus "with the object of spreading Islam and overthrowing infidel practices". This was a commutation tax, charged from non-Muslims in the feudatory states as well as in the empire, whether in royal service or engaged in private vocations or agriculture for their not embracing Islam, and had to be paid by them in person with marks of humility. For the purpose of assessment and collection of this tax the entire non-Muslim population was divided into three grades: the first grade paid 48 dirhams, the second 24 and the third 12 a year, the value of a dirham being a little over a quarter of a rupee. Women, children, beggars, slaves and paupers were exempted from the tax. Monks, if they were not members of wealthy monasteries were also exempted. The effect of this tax on the Hindus was highly injurious. Manucci observes that many Hindus who could not pay *jizya* became Muhammadans in order to "obtain relief from the insults of the collectors". Aurangzeb was gratified. He ignored Hindu protests. He also re-imposed the pilgrim's tax on the Hindus, each of whom had to pay rupees six and annas four for bathing in the Ganga at Prayag, and a similar sum at other holy places. The emperor abolished the customs duties in the case of Muslim merchants, but continued it at the old rate of 5% in case of Hindus. This was done in order to put pressure on the Hindus. He announced that those Hindus who embraced Islam would be granted stipends and free gifts. He even offered posts to converts in the state service, and to liberate Hindu prisoners, if they turned Muslims. Some Muhammadan families in the Panjab have in their possession letters patent appointing their Hindu ancestors to the posts of Qanungos as a reward of apostasy from Hinduism. When two or more persons quarrelled about a property, the emperor put one in possession who became Muslim. In 1671 Aurangzeb dismissed Hindu revenue collectors from all the provinces, but as the adequate number of qualified Muslims was not available the former were allowed to remain in service in some parts of the empire. In 1688 he prohibited Hindu religious fairs and festivals and at the same year all Hindus except Rajputs were forbidden to ride in palanquins, on elephants and good horses. They were forbidden to carry arms. Thus Aurangzeb put every kind of pressure on the Hindus in order to induce their conversion to Islam. Sometimes he even used force to gain converts (*S.R. Sharma, Religious Policy of the Mughuls*, p. 162). He threw political wisdom to the wind and made the propagation of

Islam the chief aim of his administration. Verily, the state under him became a large missionary institution.

Jat Rebellion, 1668-1689.

Aurangzeb's deliberate policy of converting India into a Muslim country was opposed in Rajasthan, Malwa, Bundelkhand and Khandesh, where many converted mosques were demolished by the people and the Muslim call to prayer was stopped. In some places the *jizya* collectors were beaten, their beards were plucked out and then they were driven away. But the first organised Hindu reaction against Aurangzeb's policy of persecution occurred in the district of Mathura. There the sturdy Jat peasantry under its leader Gokul in 1669 killed Abdul Nabi, the local district officer who was faithfully carrying out his master's policy of temple-destruction and image-breaking. This officer had built a mosque in the heart of the holy city of Mathura on the ruins of Hindu temples, had removed the carved stone railing presented to Keshava Rai temple by Dara and had been abducting Hindu girls. The Jats killed him and plundered the pargana of Sadabad. After a prolonged warfare with several contingents of troops sent by the emperor, the Jats were defeated in a bloody battle near Tilpat. Gokul was captured with his family and brought to Agra where on the platform of the police office his limbs were hacked to pieces and his family was forcibly converted to Islam. Nevertheless, the Jats continued to be rebellious and their leadership was assumed in 1686 by Raja Ram of Sinsani and Ramchera of Soghar, who trained their clansmen in open warfare, built strong mud-forts in inaccessible jungles and carried on depredations to the gates of Agra. Raja Ram acquired fame by defeating and killing in 1687 the famous Mughul commander Uighur Khan and plundering another noble Mir Ibrahim entitled Mahabat Khan. He even looted Akbar's tomb at Sikandra, caused great damage to the building and according to Manucci, dug out and burnt the great emperor's bones. Aurangzeb was alarmed and in 1688 sent his grandson Bidar Bakht, assisted by Bishan Singh, ruler of Amber, then in charge of Mathura district, to put down the Jats. Raja Ram was defeated and slain in July 1688 and Sinsani was captured by the Mughuls after a tough battle in which the Mughuls lost 900 men and the Jats 1500. Raja Ram's place was taken by his nephew Churaman who continued the resistance till Aurangzeb's death. He collected a powerful army and became the founder of the ruling

house of Bharatpur. The rise of the Jats became ultimately an important cause of the downfall of the Mughul empire.

Satnami Rebellion.

The next formidable rebellion was that of the Satnamis in the districts of Narnol and Mewat. The Satnamis were a peaceful religious brotherhood who believed in the unity of God and were employed in agriculture. They shaved their head and face including eye-brows and were, therefore, called Mundiyas. The rebellion was due to a private quarrel between a Satnami peasant and a Mughul foot soldier of the local revenue collector. The soldier's unbecoming conduct aroused the wrath of the Satnamis and the quarrel developed into a holy war against the Mughuls. The movement spread quickly and received impetus on account of the rumours that an old prophetess had made the Satnamis proof against bullets. The confidence of the Satnamis grew as the result of a number of victories which they gained over the imperial troops under local officers. They plundered and occupied the town and district of Narnol. Aurangzeb was compelled to send a large army under Radandaz Khan, equipped with artillery. He wrote out magic charm on papers and tied them to the flags of the army so as to counteract the enemy's spells. The Satnamis fought stubbornly but were ultimately defeated. Two thousands of them lay dead on the field and the rest were terrorised into submission.

Aurangzeb and the Sikhs.

Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution roused the Sikhs who broke out into a rebellion and eventually became an important cause of the downfall of the Mughul empire. The Sikh sect, founded by Guru Nanak at the beginning of the 16th century, was purely a religious brotherhood and believed in the unity of God and spiritual liberation by means of prayer, self-restraint and good actions. Nanak rejected image-worship and denounced caste and the supremacy of the Brahmans and Mullahs. His first three successors followed in his footsteps. The fourth, Guru Ram Das, was the first to aspire to a temporal as well as spiritual domination. His successor Guru Arjun, who succeeded to the gaddi in 1581, edited the Guru Granth Sahib, built the Golden Temple at Amritsar, organised the Sikhs into a compact community and established for himself a regular source of income by appointing officers, called masands, to collect the tithes and offerings from the Sikhs wherever they might be. He

blessed the rebellious Khusrav and was, therefore, imprisoned and tortured to death by Jahangir in 1606. His son Hargovind was trained himself as a warrior, came into clash with Shah Jahan by encroaching on the royal game preserves and defeating the Mughul troops sent against him. Shah Jahan ordered Hargovind's house and property to be seized. The Guru thereafter took refuge at Kiratpur and died in 1645. He was succeeded by Har Rai after whose death Har Kishan became guru. Then came Tegh Bahadur who took up his residence at Anandpur. Meanwhile, Aurangzeb who had become emperor began his policy of religious persecution, ordered the Sikh temples to be destroyed and masands to be expelled from the cities. Guru Tegh Bahadur offered open resistance and was, therefore, arrested and taken to Delhi where he was asked to embrace Islam and on his refusal was tortured for five days and then put to death (December 1675).

Aurangzeb's fanaticism and his deliberate policy of compelling the people to turn Muslims brought about an irreconcilable breach between the Sikhs and Islam and compelled Tegh Bahadur's son Govind Singh to determine to avenge his father's death. He transformed the Sikhs into a military community and called it *Khalsa.* The members of the Khalsa were to put on a distinctive dress and to keep on their person five things beginning with K—Kesh (hair), Kirpan (sword), Kachha (underwear), Kanghi (comb) and Kara (iron bangle). They were further to give up all caste distinctions and all restrictions about food and drink. A new initiation into the Khalsa was prescribed and its members were made to believe that they were a chosen people. Guru Govind's Sikhism thus became a veritable counterblast to Aurangzeb's Islam, and under his command the Khalsa pursued the policy of fighting fanaticism with fanaticism.

In northern Panjab Guru Govind Singh had to fight against Muslim officers and Hindu rajas who were directed by Aurangzeb to co-operate with imperial troops in putting down the rebellious Sikhs. The guru defeated them more than once and his followers went on increasing. The guru's home at Anandpur was five times besieged and eventually he had to abandon this place and to take refuge in the plains. He was pursued by the Mughuls and hunted from place to place and had to escape to the Dakhin through Bikaner. Two of his sons were slain during the course of fighting and the

remaining two were put to death by the faujdar of Sarhind (1705). The guru returned to northern India on the receipt of the news of Aurangzeb's death. He joined Bahadur Shah in the latter's war with his brothers and proceeded with him to the Dakhin. While in camp at Nadir on the Godavari, he was stabbed to death by an Afghan follower in 1708.

Govind Singh was the tenth and the last guru of the Sikhs. A little before his death he had abolished the guruship and instructed his followers to turn the Sikhs into a milltary democracy. "I shall always be present wherever five Sikhs are assembled," he said. The Sikhs by the time of Guru Govind Singh's death were a powerful rebellious community, vowed to end the Mughul tyranny.

Policy towards the Rajputs.

Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur who was the foremost Hindu chief in the empire and had fought against Aurangzeb at Dharmat and plundered his camp at Khajuha, died on December 20, 1678, at Jamrud in Afghanistan where he had been posted to guard that Mughul outpost. Aurangzeb who hated the Rajputs and could not freely indulge in his policy of extirpating Hinduism as long as powerful Hindu rulers like Jai Singh Kachhawaha and Jaswant Singh were alive, welcomed the event and ordered annexation of the Raja's kingdom of Marwar, himself proceeding to Ajmer to deal with any possible Rathor national resistance. The step was necessary, for the success of the emperor's policy of converting the country into an Islamic state depended upon the obliteration of the foremost Hindu state which was likely to offer resistance and defeat his object. After the occupation of Marwar, Aurangzeb returned to Delhi on 12th April, 1679 and that very day reimposed the *jizya* on the Hindus which had been exempted by Akbar about a little over one hundred years before. Meanwhile, Jaswant Singh's family was on its way from Jamrud to Delhi and at Lahore his two queens gave birth to two posthumous sons in February 1679, one of whom died after his birth and the other lived to become the future Maharaja Ajit Singh. Ajit Singh with his mother arrived at Delhi in June and Aurangzeb ordered him to be transferred to the royal harem and offered him the throne of Jodhpur on the condition of his embracing Islam as he subsequently did to the Maratha king Shahu in 1703. This was too much to the Rathors who, under their leader Durga Das, rescued

their baby king Ajit Singh by a stratagem, substituting a maid-servant and her child in place of the Rani and the prince. While a band of Rathor warriors engaged the Mughul troops who had been sent to seize the Rani and Ajit Singh and had besieged Jaswant Singh's mansion at Delhi, Durga Das at the head of another band of Rathors had covered nine miles, taking with them the Rani disguised in male attire and other members of the Rathor ruling family. Aurangzeb sent an army to fight Durga Das and bring back the Rani and her son to Delhi. The Rathors fought and defeated the Mughuls three times and drove them back. Ajit Singh was thus able to reach Marwar in safety. Baffled in his design Aurangzeb substituted a milkman's infant in place of Ajit, converted him to Islam, gave him the name of Muhammad Raj and proclaimed that Durga Das' protege was a bogus prince. He removed Indra Singh of Nagaur, who had been given Marwar for being a loyal partisan of the Mughuls, and formally annexed the state of Jodhpur which was now placed under a Mughul commandant. The emperor again proceeded to Ajmer and despatched his son Akbar with a big army to reconquer Marwar where the population had risen against the Mughul oppressors. After a prolonged warfare the imperialists succeeded in occupying the country. They plundered all the towns and destroyed the temples, but the Rathors who had taken shelter in the hills and deserts, continued harassing them.

Aurangzeb next turned against Mewar and asked Maharana Raj Singh to pay the *jizya* for his entire state. Raj Singh correctly realising that Aurangzeb's real intention was to blot out the Rajput states from existence, took up the cause of Ajit Singh and prepared to offer a tough resistance to the Mughuls. But Aurangzeb forestalled the Maharana's designs and sent 7,000 chosen troops under Hasan Ali Khan to invade Mewar. The Maharana thereupon retired to the hills, abandoning his capital at Udaipur. Hasan Ali Khan occupied Chittor and Udaipur and demolished the temples there. He pursued Raj Singh and defeated him on 1st February, 1680. The emperor now returned to Ajmer leaving prince Akbar incharge of Chittor. Raj Singh then raided the Mughul outposts and cut off their supplies. Some of the Rajputs surprised Akbar's camp near Chittor one night and put many Mughuls to death. After this initial success, Raj Singh proceeded to Bednor and defeated Akbar inflicting upon him severe losses. Aurangzeb transferred Akbar to Jodhpur, appointed prince

Azam to take charge of Chittor, and planned another invasion of Mewar. Three armies from three different directions were to enter the Mewar hills simultaneously; the first under Azam from the eastern side was to pass through Deobari Pass and attack Udaipur, the second under Muazzam from the north was to proceed by way of Raj Samudra lake, and the third under Akbar from the west to invade the country through Deosuri Pass. Of these the first two generals failed to force their entry into the heart of Mewar. Akbar reached Nadol and after two months' stay there advanced to Deosuri. But he could make no further progress and failed to drive Raj Singh who was encamped in Kumbhalgarh, eight miles south of Akbar's encampment. The prince became despaired of success and realising the futility of his father's reactionary policy, entered into negotiations with the Rajputs and on January 11, 1681 rebelled against his father and with the assistance of the Rathors and Sisodias proclaimed himself emperor of India.

Prince Akbar's momentous decision was due to the Rajput overtures made a few weeks before, inviting him to seize the throne and declare himself emperor with their assistance. It was agreed that the Sisodias and the Rathors would place their forces at the disposal of the prince who would celebrate his accession and proceed against his father. Realising that his father's policy of religious fanaticism and rooting out the Rajputs was suicidal to the country as well as to the Mughul ruling dynasty, Akbar prepared to abide by the advice of Durga Das and Maharana Raj Singh. But Raj Singh's death on November 1, 1680 and the accession of his son Jai Singh delayed the project of an attack on Aurangzeb. As soon as the new Mewar ruler was ready to place his contingent at the prince's disposal, Akbar had a *fatwa* issued under the signatures of four Muslim ulemas, declaring that Aurangzeb had violated the Quranic law and, therefore, forfeited the throne. The prince then crowned himself emperor on January 11, 1681. On 12th January, he accompanied by the Sisodia and Rathor forces began his fateful march against his father who was encamped at Ajmer. The emperor, who had tender affection for Akbar, was stunned by the blow, but soon recovered from the shock and despite a slender army at his command issued out of Ajmer and took up his position at Doraha, ten miles south of that town. He resorted to cunning diplomacy for winning over Akbar's adherents, and had a letter written to the prince's most staunch follower Tahavvur Khan by the latter's father-in-law,

promising him pardon, if he came over to the imperial service, but threatening to ruin his family, then in the imperial camp, in the event of his refusal to comply. Obsessed by the thought of the welfare of his wives and sons, Tahavvur stole one night into Aurangzeb's camp without informing Akbar or any of the Rajput chiefs, and was killed by Aurangzeb's attendants. Next the emperor wrote a letter to Akbar commending him for successfully implementing the emperor's stratagem of bringing the principal Rajputs within his reach so as to have them crushed between the imperial troops and those of Akbar. This letter was purposely dropped near the Rajput camp and when it was read by Durga Das, he was surprised and went straight to Akbar for an explanation. The prince's eunuchs informed Durga Das that he was asleep. Then Durga Das went to Tahavvur and found that he had secretly gone over to Aurangzeb side during the previous night. The Rajputs now could not help believing that Akbar had hatched a plot in conjunction with his father to bring about their destruction, and consequently they fell on Akbar's camp, looted his property and abandoned him and marched away to Mewar. Most of Akbar's troops deserted the bewildered prince and went off to join Aurangzeb. When Akbar awoke he found with him only 350 horses and feeling that his safety lay in joining the Rajputs, he retreated towards Mewar with some of his wives and children and part of his treasure. Next day Aurangzeb occupied Akbar's camp and punished his followers, specially the four mullahs who had issued a *fatwa* against him.

Durga Das having soon discovered that the break-up of the confederacy was due to the fraud played by Aurangzeb and not to treachery on the part of Akbar, took the prince under his protection and after a perilous journey through Rajputana and Khandesh conducted him to the court of Shambhuji, son of Shivaji, the only Indian ruler bold enough to afford shelter to the fugitive prince.

Aurangzeb now decided to patch up a peace with the Maharana of Udaipur in order to proceed to the Dakhin to put down Akbar's pretensions to the sovereignty of India, before the latter could secure assistance of the Maratha king and endanger the peace of the empire. Maharana Jai Singh whose dominion was threatened by the imperial force was equally anxious to settle matters with the emperor. Accordingly a treaty was concluded between the two on 24th June, 1681.

The Maharana ceded the parganas of Madal Pur and Bidnor in lieu of the *jizya* imposed on him. The emperor appointed the Maharana to the mansab of 5,000 and confirmed him in his territory with the title of 'Rana'. Marwar, however, was not prepared to make peace, and it remained at war with the Mughul emperor for twenty-seven years more. The Rajput war alienated the sympathy of the loyal Rathor and Sisodia clans from the Mughul throne. Their example was followed by the Hara and Gaur clans, which undermined the Mughul authority in northern India. However, Aurangzeb proceeded towards the Dakhin at the head of a large army and arrived at Burhanpur in November and at Aurangabad on April 1, 1682.

During Aurangzeb's absence in the Dakhin, Marwar continued to be in rebellion. The Rathor patriots, who occupied the hills and deserts, often descended upon the plains, fell on the Mughul outposts and cut off their convoys and communications. Thus they kept on harassing the Mughul governor of Jodhpur and gave him no time to consolidate his hold over the Rathor kingdom. The history of the Rathor war of liberation falls into three clear stages: (1) From 1681 to 1687 it was a people's war as Ajit Singh was a mere child and the famous Rathor hero Durga Das was absent in the Dakhin. There was no central authority among the Rathors who fought individually and their guerilla bands simultaneously attacked the Mughuls at several places and gave them no rest or time to establish a regular administration. (2) From 1687 to 1701 the Rathor command was in the hands of Durga Das who had returned from the Dakhin and with the assistance of Durjan Sal Hara of Bundi cleared the plains of Marwar and invaded the Mughul territory as far as Mewat and the neighbourhood of Delhi. In 1690 he even defeated the governor of Ajmer, but failed to recover Marwar, as its new Mughul governor Shujaat Khan was a capable man who pursued the clever policy of having secret understanding with the local Rathor leaders and paying them *Chauth* or one-fourth of the imperial revenue from customs duties. Durga Das, however, made peace with the emperor to whom he was persuaded to deliver prince Akbar's daughter Safiyat-un-Nisa (1694) and son Buland Akhtar (1698) as the result of which Aurangzeb appointed Durga Das a mansabdar of 3,000 and the commandant of Patan in Gujarat. Ajit Singh was given in jagir the parganas of Jalor, Sanchod and Siwana and a rank in the Mughul service, but was not restored to his kingdom. (3) The third stage

lasted from 1701 to 1707 at the end of which Ajit Singh succeeded in recovering Marwar and making himself independent of Delhi. In 1701 Azam Shah was appointed Mughul governor of Jodhpur and he provoked the Rathors. The emperor tried to get Durga Das arrested or killed. So the Rathor warrior fled to Marwar and was joined by Ajit Singh and they again set up the standard of rebellion. Aurangzeb was once again compelled to make peace with Ajit Singh, and give him Merta in jagir. Durga Das also submitted soon after and was restored to his rank and post in Gujarat. But in 1706 the Marathas invaded Gujarat and Ajit Singh and Durga Das again rebelled against the Mughuls. Although Durga Das was drived into Koli country, Ajit Singh gained prominence by defeating Muhkam Singh of Nagaur, a loyal vassal of the emperor. Meanwhile, news of Aurangzeb's death reached Rajputana. Ajit Singh attacked the Mughul governor and expelled him from Marwar. He also recovered Sojat, Pali and Merta from the hands of the Mughuls and made himself Maharaja of Marwar in 1707.

Other parts of northern India after 1681.

Aurangzeb's long absence from northern India and draining away its revenues and man-power to fight the interminable Dakhin wars, and his placing the north Indian provinces in the charge of second-rate officers with small contingents of troops and limited resources, caused disorder and misrule in the country. Besides the Rathor war of independence in Marwar and veiled defiance to the imperial authority in Mewar and some other parts of Rajasthan, serious Hindu risings occurred in Malwa, Bihar and Bundelkhand. The English traders revolted in Bangal in 1686, and the wild region of Gondwana was distracted throughout the last quarter of the 17th century. Harassed by Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution and imperialistic greed the ruling families of Deogarh and Chanda into which Gondwana was divided, turned Muslim, but even then failed to save their lands. Gujarat and Malwa were harassed by Maratha incursion since the last years of the 17th century. The first Maratha raid on Malwa took place in November 1699 under Krishna Savant who looted the neighbourhood of Dhamoni. There-after the Marathas repeated their incursions in Berar and in co-operation with local zamindars ravaged Khandesh and Malwa. In March 1706 Dhanaji Jadav penetrated into Gujarat, defeated two divisions of the Mughul army and captured two generals, Safdar

Khan Babi and Nazr Ali Khan. Next, he defeated and imprisoned Abdul Hamid Khan, deputy-governor of the province and his chief officers, and plundered their entire camp. Aurangzeb had alienated the principal business communities of Gujarat, namely, the Ismailia and Daudi Bohras who were Shias by arresting their religious teachers and imposing upon them Sunni teachings and practices. This unwise policy kept the province in a state of ferment.

The most redoubtable and successful enemy of Aurangzeb in northern India was Chhatra Sal, son of Champat Rai Bundela of Orchha in Bundelkhand. After his father Champat Rai had been compelled by sheer force to submit to Aurangzeb in 1661, Chhatra Sal had entered the Mughul service as a petty captain and fought in Dakhin under Raja Jai Singh. Inspired by Shivaji's opposition to the Mughuls, he offered his sword to the Maratha hero to annihilate the Mughul imperialism. But as Shivaji advised him to foment risings in his own country in order to distract the enemy's attention, Chhatra Sal returned to Bundelkhand and was welcomed by the Hindu population which had grown sick of Aurangzeb's policy of religious intolerance. He was joined by a large number of people and elected king of Bundelkhand. He defeated Mughul troops and raided Dhamoni and Sironj and began realising *Chauth* from the neighbouring districts in the Mughul empire. Within a few years Chhatra Sal captured Kalinjar and Dhamoni and ravaged the whole of Malwa. He attained so great a success that Aurangzeb was obliged to make peace with him in 1705 and appointed him a mansabdar of 4,000 with a post in the Dakhin army. After the emperor's death in 1707 Chhatra Sal returned to Bundelkhand to establish himself as an independent ruler.

Aurangzeb's Dakhin Policy.

During the first half of his reign, Aurangzeb left the affairs of the Dakhin in the hands of his governors who did not have much difficulty in dealing with the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda which were in the process of decay. Bijapur was more defiant than Golkunda and the imperial troops had to be employed against the former on several occasions. The ruler of Golkunda, Abdulla Qutub Shah (1626-72), was an indolent and pleasure-loving prince who spent most of his time in the company of women and left the administration in the hands of his favourites. Abul Hasan who succeeded

him did not prove better and allowed the state affairs to be managed by his two Brahman ministers, Madanna and Akkanna. He made a defensive alliance with Shivaji and promised him a subsidy of five lakhs of rupees a year.

As soon as Aurangzeb was free from the war of succession, he despatched Jai Singh of Jaipur early in 1665 to chastise Bijapur for evading the terms of the treaty of August 1657. Jai Singh was also commissioned to put down Shivaji. The Rajput general first of all humbled Shivaji by a masterly campaign which was concluded by the capitulation of Purandar in June 1665. Next, he invaded Bijapur with the co-operation of Shivaji who had now become an ally of the Mughuls. After a long preliminary campaign in which the Mughuls were greatly harassed by the guerilla tactics of Bijapur troops, Jai Singh advanced to within 12 miles of Bijapur fort. The sultan had greatly strengthened the defences of his capital and devastated the country around for six miles so as not to leave any means of subsistence for the advancing enemy. Jai Singh's plan was to capture the impregnable fort by a *coup-de-main*, but this was not possible in view of the vigilance of the sultan's troops. The Rajput general consequently decided to retreat, but had to suffer great losses as the Bijapuris attacked him and obliged him to fight two battles. At the same time, the Mughul ally Shivaji failed to capture the fort of Panhala. After suffering heavy losses Jai Singh returned to Aurangabad. Bijapur was much heartened by the success and was joined by Golkunda. Aurangzeb censured Jai Singh and recalled him to court. The general died broken-hearted on the way at Burhan-pur (12th July, 1666).

For about 10 years Bijapur enjoyed immunity from Mughul attack. During this period Sultan Ali Adil Shah II addicted to wine and women, had entrusted the administration to a capable minister named Abdul Muhammad who gave peace and prosperity to the country. On the sultan's death, Sikandar Adil Shah, a child of four, became king in December 1672, and a civil war broke out among the nobles who became divided into two factions, the one consisting of the Afghans and the other of the Dakhinis and the Abyssinians. Taking advantage of this, Bahadur Khan, the Mughul governor, invaded Bijapur in 1676, but was defeated. The emperor was angry and recalled Bahadur Khan and appointed Dilir Khan

governor of the Dakhin. This man's intrigues with Sidi Masud, the minister of Bijapur, succeeded in making that kingdom a virtual dependency of the Mughuls. The sultan's sister was sent to Delhi to be married to prince Azam, Aurangzeb's son. But Masud soon alienated Dilir Khan by making a secret pact with Shivaji. Masud prepared to fight, but as he got no assistance from the Marathas, he reverted to an alliance with Dilir Khan who sent an army to assist Bijapur and capture Bhupalgarh from the Marathas. Bijapur by this time was reduced to anarchy owing to the civil war among its nobles. Dilir Khan taking advantage of the situation demanded that Masud should be retired as minister in favour of his (Dilir's) nominee. As Masud refused to comply, Dilir Khan invaded Bijapur in September 1679, but failed to achieve success on account of the Maratha assistance to Masud and the hostility of Shah Alam, the newly appointed governor of the Dakhin. Such was the disturbed condition of Bijapur when Aurangzeb in person arrived in the Dakhin in 1681.

The third power in the Dakhin was that of the Marathas who had emerged into importance under their leader Shivaji whose father Shahji Bhonsle was originally a small jagirdar in the service of the sultan of Ahmadnagar but had eventually became a king-maker in that state. Shahji was, however, defeated by Shah Jahan in 1636 after which he entered the service of the sultan of Bijapur as a leading Hindu general. His jagir in the Poona district was given to his son Shivaji, while his second son Vyankoji inherited his territory in the Arcot district. Shivaji destined to be a great leader and liberator of the Hindus of southern India, entered on a career of conquest at the age of twenty and acquired several forts from Bijapur. Next, he conquered the principality of Javali and doubled the extent of his dominion. In 1656 he first came into conflict with the Mughuls and raided Ahmadnagar and Junnar. But Aurangzeb, who was then governor of the Dakhin, took reprisals and ravaged the Maratha villages. When Bijapur concluded a peace with the Mughuls in August 1657, Shivaji also submitted and was forgiven by Aurangzeb, though only outwardly. Aurangzeb's real intention was to crush Shivaji after he was free from the war of succession.

During Aurangzeb's absence from the Dakhin, Shivaji planned the conquest to Konkan and occupied Kalyan, Bhiwanmandi and

Mahuli. The Bijapur government at last made a grand preparation to crush Shivaji and sent Afzal Khan to accomplish this object. But Shivaji forestalled Afzal's designs of a treacherous attack and slew him at an interview and attacked and dispersed his army, (November 20, 1659). He followed up his success by occupying south Konkan and the Kolhapur district. In 1660 Bijapur made another attempt to get rid of Shivaji and its general Sidi Jauhar besieged him in Panhala fort and compelled him to evacuate it. At this very time Shayista Khan, the Mughul viceroy of the Dakhin, occupied Poona and the fort of Chakan. Shivaji defeated Shayista Khan's army in the north Konkan and continued fighting with the Mughuls for two years with varying success. During the mid-night of April 15, 1663, Shivaji surprised Shayista Khan's camp in Poona wounding the Mughul viceroy and killing one of his sons, one officer, 40 attendants and 6 women and wounding a number of others including his two other sons. Shayista Khan was thoroughly frightened and was recalled by Aurangzeb. Next, Shivaji sacked the city of Surat and acquired a valuable booty estimated at one crore of rupees. Aurangzeb now despatched Jai Singh with instructions to subjugate Shivaji. The great Rajput general and diplomat succeeded in his mission. By clever diplomacy he instigated many an important Dakhini nobles to oppose Shivaji and thus he established a ring of enemies around him. Next, the Raja besieged the fort of Purandar and at the same time sent an army into the heart of Maharashtra to plunder and burn the villages there. When Purandar was about to fall, Shivaji surrendered it, interviewed Jai Singh and entered into a treaty on 22nd June, 1664, by which he ceded to the empire three-fourth of his territories and forts, retaining only one-fourth for himself. He acknowledged the suzerainty of the emperor and bound to send a contingent of 5,000 horse for service in the Mughul army. He loyally assisted Jai Singh in the Mughul invasion of Bijapur. After this great success, Jai Singh successfully persuaded Shivaji to pay a visit to the emperor at Agra, holding out great prospects for the Maratha hero. He was introduced to the emperor in the Diwan-i-Khas on May 22, 1666, and made to stand in the row occupied by the mansabdars of 5,000. Shivaji felt humiliated at this undignified treatment, made a loud protest against it in the open darbar, and left it in anger. He was, therefore, arrested and imprisoned in the Jaipur House at Agra and forbidden to attend the court. But he escaped from the prison after three months of

captivity by concealing himself and his son Shambhuji in two large baskets of sweetmeats and reached Maharashtra after twenty-five days' travel by unfrequented routes. Aurangzeb was stunned and made all possible arrangements for his capture, but without success. For three years after his return Shivaji did not invade the Mughul territory and made peace with Aurangzeb who recognised him as an independent ruler. But in January 1670, a fresh war broke out between him and the Mughuls as the result of which Shivaji recovered all the territories and forts which he had ceded by the treaty of Purandar of 1665. He plundered Surat a second time in October 1670. Next, he made raids on Aurangabad and the Mughul provinces of Baglan, Khandesh and Barar and defeated a number of Mughul armies under tried generals. Aurangzeb was greatly worried by Shivaji's daring success and appointed Bahadur Khan, subsequently entitled Khan Jahan, governor of the Dakhin to check the Maratha progress and, if possible, to put down Shivaji for good. His five years' governorship failed to accomplish this task and Shivaji achieved success after success, and levied *Chauth* from the Mughul territory in the Dakhin. He conquered Ramnagar and Jawhar. He celebrated his coronation as an independent Chhatrapati at Raigarh on June 16, 1674. After this, he conquered the Karnatak and part of Mysore. Shivaji gave assistance to Bijapur which under its regent Sidi Masud entered into a treaty with the Maratha king in 1678, and attacked the Mughul territory. But he was entrapped by Ranmast Khan and escaped only after losing 4,000 of his men and all his booty. His health was greatly impaired in this campaign and on return he fell ill and died on April 14, 1680. He was succeeded by his eldest living son Shambhuji, but not without opposition.

Shambhuji who followed his father's policy of raiding the Mughul territory in the Dakhin, attacked and plundered Burhanpur early in February 1681. In June he learnt of the arrival of prince Akbar accompanied by Durga Das Rathor and agreed to give him shelter and to support him with a Maratha army for capturing the throne of Delhi. While negotiations for settling the details of the proposed alliance and expedition were still going on, Aurangzeb who had patched up a peace with Jai Singh of Mewar, sent a powerful force under his son Azam to pursue Akbar and himself hastening to the Dakhin, reached Burhanpur on 23rd November, 1681. The

emperor opened a vigorous offensive against Shambhuji sending four armies to invade Maharashtra simultaneously from the four different directions. Sayyid Hasan Ali Khan was despatched to north Konkan, Shahab-ud-din Khan to Nasik, Ruh-Ulla Khan and prince Shah Alam to Ahmadnagar district to guard it against a possible Maratha attack, and prince Azam was sent to Bijapur to cut off Maratha supplies and prevent the sultan from sending any assistance to them. But the emperor did not gain any substantial advantage in 1682 and all the armies had to be recalled in April 1683. Fortunately for him at this time, Shambhuji invaded the Portuguese territory and made peace with the Mughuls. Prince Akbar who was disappointed in not getting real assistance from Shambhuji, left Pali, his residence, and decided to proceed to the Portuguese territory and from there in a ship to Persia to take refuge with the Shah. But he was persuaded by Durga Das and Kavi Kalash, Shambhuji's prime-minister, to return from Vingurla where he had bought a ship and was about to sail for Persia. Akbar wasted another year (1684) in sloth, without getting adequate aid from Shambhuji whose government was distracted by the jealousy of the local nobles against the prime-minister, Kavi Kalash, who was a Kanyakubja Brahman from northern India and, therefore, was hated as foreigner at the Maratha capital. Akbar, therefore, could take up no offensive against his father.

On the other hand, Aurangzeb took advantage of the confusion at the court of Raigarh and planned another offensive in September 1683. While the Sidi of Janjira was directed to keep a watch on Akbar's movements, a strong force under Shah Alam was sent into the south Konkan to launch a main attack on the Maratha territory. At the same time, strong divisions were posted at Poona, Nasik and Akalkot to overawe the people and to prevent them from assisting the Maratha king. Shah Alam entered Savantavadi, occupied Bicholim and planned to capture Goa by treachery. This alienated the Portuguese who stopped supplying grain to the prince who now proceeded northwards, plundering and burning the Maratha towns and villages, but was obliged to return to the north of Goa on account of a famine. Shah Alam had to return to the Ramghat Pass where about one-third of his troops and quite a large number of beasts of burden perished through pestilence, compelling him to return to Ahmadnagar without having been able to achieve anything against

the Marathas. But the Mughuls achieved a great success in other quarters; the Maratha army was beaten more than once and prince Akbar in despair was compelled to sail for Persia from Rajapur in February 1686. He reached the Persian court in January 1688. Another Mughul army under Maqarrab Khan surprised Shambhuji at Sangameshwar, 22 miles from Ratnagiri, where the Maratha king had taken shelter and was absorbed in drink and merry-making. Shambhuji with his minister Kavi Kalash and 25 of his chief followers were taken prisoners on 11th February, 1689. These were brought to Aurangzeb's camp at Bahadurgarh, dressed as baffoons in a long procession, accompanied by drums and trumpets. Aurangzeb offered to spare Shambhuji's life if he surrendered his forts and treasures; but the Maratha king refused to do so and openly abused him and his Prophet and asked for one of his daughters to be given to him in marriage. So he was tortured and his limbs were mutilated one by one for 24 days and then finally hacked to pieces on March 21, 1689. Kavi Kalash was similarly tortured and hacked to pieces.

Extinction of the Bijapur kingdom, 1686.

While Aurangzeb was conducting operations against the Marathas, he felt that it was practically impossible to destroy them without first completely subjugating the Shia kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda, which were directly or indirectly sending assistance to the Maratha king Shambhuji. Consequently, after a short period of lull, the emperor planned a final campaign against Bijapur, the government of which under the ministership of Sharza Khan had grown very weak. The capital city Bijapur was besieged in April 1685, and the operations begun under prince Azam. Fifteen months' siege produced little impression on the garrison, as the fort was not completely invested and supplies and reinforcements continued coming from Shambhuji, the sultan of Golkunda and from Masud, ex-minister of Bijapur, who had established himself as an independent ruler at Adoni. On the other hand, the imperialists suffered from want of supplies. They were, however, soon reinforced by Gazi-ud-din Firoz Jang. Nevertheless, they did not succeed in capturing the fort. So, Aurangzeb himself proceeded to Bijapur on July 13, 1686, and under his personal direction, the siege was pressed with vigour. The emperor personally supervised the operations and exhorted his men by his presence. The garrison, which

had been suffering from lack of provisions lost heart and surrendered on September 22, 1686. Sultan Sikandar, the last ruler of the Adil Shahi dynasty, waited on Aurangzeb and was well received. He was deprived of his kingdom, was enrolled a mansabdar in the Mughul service with the title of 'Khan', and was given an annual pension of one lakh. Aurangzeb entered the evacuated city on 22th, erased all pictures and Shia inscriptions on the walls of the Adil Shahi palace, and annexed the Bijapur kingdom, taking the ex-ruler's officers in his service.

Fall of Golkunda, 1687.

Next, the emperor turned his attention towards the kingdom of Golkunda which had enjoyed immunity from Mughul attack for about 30 years, the sultan paying his tribute regularly. King Abul Hasan, the last ruler of the Qutub Shahi dynasty, had placed the administration in the hands of his Brahman minister Madanna and spent most of his time in the company of courtesans and dancing girls. The predominance of Hindu influence at Golkunda and the latter's alliance with the Maratha King Shambhuji were particularly offensive to Aurangzeb. The immediate occasion of the outbreak of hostility, however, was the interception of the sultan's letter to his agent in the imperial camp in which the Qutub Shah had called Aurangzeb "a mean-minded coward for attacking a helpless young orphan like Sikandar Adil Shah," and mentioned that he would despatch a powerful force to support Bijapur. The emperor took offence and in July 1685, sent Shah Alam to capture Hyderabad; but the prince was held up at Malkhed by a Golkunda army and obtained no success. But in October Mir Muhammad Ibrahim, commander-in-chief of the Golkunda army, who was bribed by the Mughuls, deserted his master and joined Aurangzeb. The sultan was, therefore, obliged to abandon Hyderabad and flee to the fort of Golkunda. Hyderabad was occupied by Shah Alam. The sultan feeling helpless submitted and was pardoned on the condition of paying (a) one crore and twenty lakhs of rupees, besides an annual tribute of two lakhs of *huns*, (b) dismissing Madanna and Akkanna, and (c) ceding Malkhed and Seram to the empire. But sultan Abul Hasan for some time hesitated to dismiss Madanna and, therefore, the Muslim nobles and the two dowager queens of Golkunda had Madanna and Akkanna murdered in the streets of the city and their houses and families plundered and destroyed. This

was followed by a general attack on the Hindu population of Golkunda. The Mughuls were now satisfied and evacuated the Golkunda territory.

In Aurangzeb's scheme of things, an independent Golkunda was an offence and therefore after the annexation of Bijapur, he resumed operations against king Abul Hasan. The emperor in person arrived before the walls of Golkunda on February 7, 1687, and defeated the sultan's troops arrayed outside the walls. Then the fort was invested. Prince Shah Alam, however, accepted presents from the sultan and at the latter's request prepared to get him pardoned. Being apprised of the secret negotiations, Aurangzeb put Shah Alam and his family under arrest and confiscated his property. The emperor brushed aside the indifference of some of his nobles, particularly Shias, who were against a war with the brother Muslims and pushed on the siege with vigour, in spite of incessant fire from the walls of the fort which was well-supplied with guns and ammunition. But the imperial operations were hampered by scarcity of provisions and by incessant rains. The garrison took advantage of the Mughul difficulties and surprised the enemy advance battery in the night of 15th June, took Ghairat Khan, the chief of Mughul artillery and 13 other high officers as prisoners. The Mughuls, however, succeeded in recovering their lost battery on 29th June. Aurangzeb ordered three mines to be dug under the bastions of the fort and filled them with powder, the first of which was fired on 30th June. But it was misdirected and killed 1,100 imperialists. At this time the garrison made a sortie and occupied the Mughul trenches and out-posts. They were, however, defeated and driven back into the fort. The second mine when fired produced the same disastrous result and was followed by a sortie from the fort and in the struggle that followed, the Mughuls received the worst of it and had to turn back on account of the ground being flooded with water. The Mughuls thus failed to capture the fort and the siege continued. On account of repeated failures, rain and famine the morale of the Mughul army sank low. Hundreds of their troops died from starvation and the Golkunda garrison gave them no rest. But Aurangzeb with the grim determination, that characterised him, continued the siege and issued a proclamation annexing the Golkunda kingdom and calling upon its people not to send any assistance to their former ruler besieged in the fort at Golkunda.

While the emperor attained no appreciable success in open fighting, he had recourse to bribery and captured Golkunda through the treachery of an Afghan servant of the sultan, named Abdulla Pani, who opened the eastern gate of the fort at 3 o'clock in the morning of October 2, 1687, for Ruh-ulla Khan to enter into. The only Golkunda officer to offer resistance to the Mughul columns who were pouring into the fort was Abdur Razzaq Lari, but he was overpowered and almost crushed, being covered with 70 wounds on his body. Ruh-ulla entered the palace of sultan Abul Hasan who calmly prepared to meet his fate and after taking his breakfast and consoling the members of his family, he left his palace for good and was introduced by prince Azam to Aurangzeb who accused him of "encouraging the Brahmans and discouraging the Moors, to the dishonour of their religion and country," and thus justly brought this punishment on his head. He was sent a prisoner to the fortress of Daultabad and was given an allowance of 50,000 rupees a year. The emperor acquired from Golkunda 7 crores of rupees in cash, besides other valuables, like jewels, jewellery, gold and silver and furniture made of gold and silver. He took steps to take possession of the territories and forts of the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and occupied Sagar, Adoni, Kurnool, Raichur, Sera, Banglore, Bankapur, Belgaum, Wandiwash and Conjeveram.

The Maratha War of Independence, 1689-1707.

As has been already described, Aurangzeb after the fall of Bijapur and Golkunda, redoubled his efforts against the Maratha king Shambhuji and had him captured and put to death in March 1689. The Maratha capital Raigarh fell soon after, but the new Maratha king Raja Ram, younger brother of the deceased Shambhuji, escaped in the disguise of a hermit on 15th April and reached the fort of Jinji on 11th November. Raigarh fell on 29th October and the members of Shambhuji's family, including his son Shahu, then a boy of seven, were taken prisoners. Aurangzeb was now (end of 1689) the master of the entire country including the Dakhin, but his success was short-lived and within a few years the Marathas not only challenged his supremacy but also made his position precarious by countless raids on his territory and camp. The emperor sent an army to besiege Raja Ram in Jinji, but that fortress could not be captured until January 18, 1698. Raja Ram who had received

timely warning escaped to Vellore. After Shambhuji's death, the emperor made light of the Maratha power and during 1690 and 1691, he occupied himself with taking possession of the Bijapur and Golkunda dominions. Very soon, however, he was awakened to the reality of the situation when he found himself confronted by a people's war. After the death of their king, Maratha leaders, like Ram Chandra Bavdekar, Shankarji Malhar, Parashuram Trimbak and Prahlad Niraji, planned a comprehensive campaign against the Mughul invader on several fronts under a number of competent and enthusiastic commanders. Ram Chandra Bavdekar became the dictator with full authority over all the officials and commanders in Maharashtra. He appointed two capable generals, Dhanaji Jadav and Santaji Ghorpare to conduct operations against the Mughuls. These two moved to and fro from one theatre of war to another across the Dakhin peninsula and by their guerilla tactics inflicted the greatest loss on the emperor and caused boundless confusion among the Mughuls. "The difficulties of Aurangzeb were multiplied," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "by the disappearance of a common head and central government among the Marathas, because every petty Maratha captain now fought and plundered in a different quarter on his own account. The Marathas were no longer a tribe of bandits or local rebels, but one dominating factor of Deccan politics, an enemy all pervasive throughout the Indian peninsula, elusive as the wind, the all and rallying point of the enemies of Delhi empire and of disturber of public peace and regular administration throughout the Deccan and even in Malwa, Gondwana and Bundelkhand. The imperialists could not be present everywhere in full strength; hence they suffered reverses in places."

The Maratha people were paralysed for about one year only after the death of Shambhuji, the siege of their capital and the flight of their new king Raja Ram to Jinji, but seeing that the emperor was occupied in taking possession of the territories of the fallen Bijapur and Golkunda kingdoms, they recovered themselves from the shock and organised two theatres of warfare against the Mughuls; one as related above, in Maharashtra proper under Ram Chandra Bavdekar with the powers of a dictator, and the other under Prahlad Niraji with the same powers in the eastern theatre in Karnatak. The actual operations were in the hands of Dhanaji

Jadav and Santaji Ghorpare who "frequently passed from one theatre of war to the other across the peninsula and caused greatest loss and confusion to the Mughuls."

The eastern Karnatak, which had been conquered by the Muslims in the middle of the 17th century, was divided into two parts known as the Hyderabadi and Bijapuri regions. In 1677 Shivaji had conquered Jinji and the adjoining districs. Thus Karnatak now became divided into three independent parts. Shivaji's son-in-law Hiraji, who was in-charge of the Maratha territory in the Karnatak, conquered most of the Hyderabadi Karnatak north of the Palar river. On Hiraji's death in September 1689, Raja Ram took possession of the Jinji territory and was besieged in Jinji by Zulfiqar Khan about the middle of September 1690. This fortress was almost impregnable and the siege lasted till 18th January, 1698, when it was stormed and Raja Ram fled to Vishalgarh. During this period both the Mughuls and the Marathas suffered great losses, the former much more than the latter, and Zulfiqar Khan was compelled to raise the siege more than once and eventually obliged to enter into a secret understanding with Raja Ram. After the fall of Jinji the war was transferred to the western of the Maharashtra sector.

In Maharashtra proper the war continued languidly. The first Maratha success was a victory over Sharza Khan who was captured near Satara on 4th June, 1690, along with his whole family and entire camp after losing 1,500 of his troops. The Marathas quickly regained Pratapgarh, Rohira, Raigarh and Torna. In 1692 they recovered Panhala, Santaji and Dhanaji falling on the confused Mughuls and harassing them. Santaji succeeded even in levying *chauth* in the imperial region of Malkhed. In December 1695, Santaji by swift march surprised Qasim Khan who was ordered by Aurangzeb to intercept that commander, inflicted upon him a crushing defeat and plundered the Mughul general's camp. Qasim Khan committed suicide and the remnant of his force had to promise to Santaji a ransom of 20 lakhs of rupees. In January 1696, Santaji defeated and killed another Mughul general, Himmat Khan, and plundered his baggage. Unfortunately, there ensued a quarrel between Santaji Ghorpare and Dhanaji Jadav each of whom was a candidate for the post of commander-in-chief, which terminated in a battle and the murder of Santaji, who, though a general of uncommon ability and dash, was an ill-tempered

and insubordinate officer and had given great offence to Raja Ram. This civil war among the Marathas gave a temporary respite to the Mughuls for about a year. During 1697 and 1698 fighting continued and Raja Ram who had fled to Vishalgarh escaped capture near Parenda. Raja Ram died at Sinhgarh on 12th March, 1700 and after a short dispute between Shivaji III and Shambhuji II, the former was recognised as the king of the Marathas on account of his mother Tara Bai's influence and ability. In spite of these dissensions in the rank of their enemy, the Mughuls failed to achieve a considerable success even in Maharashtra proper. They, however, took Kalyan and some other places in the northern Konkan. Eventually Aurangzeb realised that it was impossible to crush the Marathas and therefore in May 1695, he sent prince Shah Alam to take charge of the Panjab, Sind and Afghanistan and later look after the affairs of northern India, while he personally established his headquarters at Brahmapuri in the heart of Maharashtra to continue warfare with the Marathas, but he did not succeed. The Marathas by their incessant guerilla activities compelled the emperor to be on the defensive in Maharashtra and Kanara. The imperial officers were greatly tired and terror-stricken and many of them entered into private understanding with the Marathas and shared with them the plunder acquired from the Mughul territory. "The Mughul administration," rightly observes Sir Judunath Sarkar, "had really dissolved and only the presence of the emperor held it together, but merely as a phantom rule." Aurangzeb, in the circumstances, followed the illusive policy of besieging the Maratha forts in person but did not succeed, as when he captured one fort, another slipped out of his possession and this continued till his death. As Sir Judunath writes: "The rest of his life is a repetition of the same sickening tale; a hill fort captured by him in person after a vast expenditure of time, men and money, the forts recovered by the Marathas from the weak Mughul garrison after a few months and its siege begun again a year or two later. His soldiers and camp followers suffered unspeakable hardships in marching over flooded rivers, muddy roads and broken hill tracts; porters disappeared, transport beasts died of hunger and overwork, scarcity of grain was ever present in the camp and the Maratha and Berad 'thieves' (as he officially called them) not far off. The mutual jealousy of his generals ruined his cause or delayed his success. The siege of eight forts, Satara, Parli, Panhala, Khelna (Vishalgarh), Kondhana (Sinhgarh), Raigarh, Torna and Wagingera, besides five places of lesser note occupied him for five

years and a half (1699-1705) after which the broken down old man of eighty-eight retired to die."

The continuous hard labour weakened Aurangzeb's health and he fell very ill after the capture of the fort of Wagingera, which caused consternation among his troops on account of the uncertainty of their future in the enemy country; but the emperor recovered from illness and proceeded slowly to Ahmadnagar where he arrived on January 31, 1706. His twenty-five years' welfare in the Dakhin had desolated southern India and caused great misery. His policy in that region proved barren and emboldened the Marathas on account of its failure. The Maratha generals followed Aurangzeb on his journey to Ahmadnagar, cutting off his supplies and communications, falling upon the stragglers and threatening to attack the emperor's own camp. "When attacked by the Mughuls in force, they would fall back a little, but like water parted by the oar would close again as soon as the attackers retired on their main body." They were no longer a band of plundering cavalry, but were equipped with artillery and other requirements of a regular army. When the emperor reached Ahmadnagar they besieged his camp and were repulsed only after a long and severe fighting in May 1706. At this time they began breaking in and invading the adjacent Mughul provinces, like Gujarat, Khandesh and even Malwa. Dhanaji Jadav invaded Berar and Khandesh. The Marathas plundered an imperial convoy which was on its way from Aurangabad to Ahmadnagar. In the midst of these troubles, Aurangzeb died on March 3, 1707. He was buried near the tomb of Shaikh-Zain-ul-Haq, four miles west of Daulatabad.

Aurangzeb's Dakhin policy had met with a disastrous failure. Far from crushing the Marathas, it had compelled them to organise themselves into a nation and to take up the offensive against the empire. His last days were gloomy on account of his fear about the future of his dynasty and empire. In spite of Aurangzeb's anxiety to avoid a war of succession among his sons, prince Azam planned to get rid of his brother Kam Bakhsh and to seize the throne for himself. A few days before his death, Aurangzeb had appointed him governor of Malwa, but he returned from the way on learning of his father's death and began making preparations for war with his brothers, Shah Alam and Kam Bakhsh and winning the throne for himself. The example had been set by Aurangzeb himself.

Administration.

Aurangzeb's administration was a highly centralised despotism. All authority was concentrated in the hands of the emperor, who like Louis XIV of France, was his own prime-minister. Being an extremely industrious man, he looked into the minutest details of administration, himself read the petitions submitted to him and either wrote orders with his own hand or dictated them. All his officers, ministers including, were kept under his strict control and were never allowed to share with him the initiation or formulation of policy. This was because Aurangzeb would not tolerate a rival authority in the state. He was extremely jealous of the royal prerogative and was strict in the enforcement of his orders. When it was reported that Ibrahim Khan, governor of Bangal, held court seated on a couch with the *qazi* and other officers sitting humbly on the floor, Aurangzeb directed his wazir "to write to him in a caustic vein that if he was unable to sit on the ground by reason of any disease, he was excused till his restoration to his health and he should urge his doctors to cure him soon". He rebuked prince Muazzam for saying his prayers after setting up canvas screens which was a special prerogative of the king. He used to say: "If a single rule is disregarded all the regulations will be destroyed." On account of the over-centralisation of the administration and his narrow conception of duty, Aurangzeb's ministers were reduced to the status of mere clerks and all initiative and fearlessness in assuming responsibilities were taken from them. This resulted in great administrative degeneration and helplessness. As has been already given, the emperor was a staunch believer in the Islamic theory of the state. As such he followed the *Shara* in every thing, political, administrative or economic, and laboured hard to convert India into a Muslim country. Thus, though the framework of the administration remained the same as under his predecessors, a vast change occurred in the manner and the spirit in which the institutions were worked.

At Aurangzeb's death in 1707, the Mughul empire consisted of twenty-one provinces, fourteen of which were situated in northern India, one, *i.e.*, Afghanistan, outside India, and the remaining six in the Dakhin. They were Agra, Ajmer, Allahabad, Awadh, Bangal, Bihar, Delhi, Gujarat, Kashmir, Lahore, Malwa, Multan, Orissa, Thatta (Sind), Kabul, Aurangabad, Berar, Bidar (Telingana), Bijapur, Hyderabad and Khandesh. The empire

extended from the Hindukush to the river Cokeroom, north of Tanjore; but the Mughul authority was disputed in Maharashtra, Kanara, Mysore and the eastern Karnatak. As in the time of Akbar, every province had a governor, a diwan and several other officers who were appointed by the emperor and were responsible to him. Despite Aurangzeb's strictness and ability as a ruler, the provincial administration greatly deteriorated on account of his more than twenty-five years' absence from northern India and continuous wars in the Dakhin. Law and order were disregarded by local chiefs and zamindars in several provinces as the natural result of the weakening of the central authority caused by the emperor's absorption in never-ending wars and also on account of his unwise policy of religious intolerance.

The land revenue of the empire, as calculated by the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar, amounted to thirty-three crores and eighty-five lakhs of rupees. Besides the land evenue, other important sources of government income were *zakat* (tithe realised from Muslims), *jizya* (poll tax from Hindus), salt tax, customs duty, mint and spoils from war. Aurangzeb believed in the Islamic theory of taxes and, therefore, remitted non-Islamic taxes and imposed the pilgrim's tax and *jizya* on the Hindus which compensated him for the loss in revenue caused by the abolition of many illegal taxes and *abwabs*. The mode of assessment and collection of revenue established by Akbar under the name of Todar Mal's ryotwari system was allowed to fall into disuse, and its place was taken by the farming system, *i.e.*, allowing the contractors to realise the revenue from the tillers of the soil and not by the officials of the state under the direct supervision of the government. On account of this change the condition of the teeming millions was worse than under Akbar or Jahangir.

Foreign trade did not occupy an important place in the economy of the Mughul empire. India exported indigo and cotton goods. After agriculture, cotton industry provided occupation to the largest number of people. The chief imports into the country were glass-ware, copper, lead and woollen cloth. Horses from Persia and spices from the Dutch Indies, glassware, wine and curiosities from Europe, slaves from Abyssinia and superior kinds of tobacco from America, were also imported. But the volume of trade was

small and the government's income from import duties was not more than 30 lakhs of rupees a year.

The Mughul army under Aurangzeb had increased considerably. He was engaged in fighting throughout his life and naturally, therefore, he needed a much larger army than his predecessors. According to Sir Jadunath's calculation, the emperor's total force in 1647 was as follows:—two lakhs cavalry, 8000 mansabdars, 7000 ahdis and barqandazes, one lakh and eighty-five thousand troops under the princes, nobles and mansabdars, and forty thousand infantry armed with muskets and guns. There was a great increase in the number during the later years of his reign on account of the Dakhin wars. The expenditure on the army under Aurangzeb was roughly double that under Shah Jahan. But in spite of the emperor's vigilance and strictness and his ability as a general, the organisation and discipline of the Mughul army were far inferior to those in the time of Akbar. There was also a deterioration in the morale of the Mughul troops.

Personality and Character.

There has in recent years been a great controversy about the personality, character and achievements of Aurangzeb. One school of writers has attempted to prove that Aurangzeb was free from religious bigotry, that he gave grants of lands to Hindu temples and priests, and that if he ordered the destruction of Hindu temples, he did so during the time of war or to reclaim those mosques which had been forcibly occupied by the Hindus and converted into temples. Some teachers of history in this country go to the extent of preaching in the sheltered atmosphere of their class-rooms that Aurangzeb was a great Indian patriot who laboured hard to bring about the political unification of the entire country, although they fight shy of committing their arguments and conclusions to writing. These views are so palpably false that they hardly merit refutation. It may at once be conceded that Aurangzeb did bestow grants of lands on a few priests or their temples, but these grants were either the confirmation or renewal of the land already held by the grantees, or made in order to reward certain individuals who had proved serviceable to the emperor or to win them over and use them as pawns in his game of diplomacy. Moreover, if Aurangzeb bestowed grants of lands on one Hindu priest or temple, he destroyed a thousand temples and deprived a

thousand Hindu priests of their means of subsistence. If the British rulers of India patronised a few Indians by bestowing favours on them during our struggle for freedom, will it be fair to infer that they did so because they were honestly anxious to advance the interest of the country ? Will it not, on the other hand, be more correct to say that they did so in order to use them as instruments in furtherance of their imperialistic designs ? It is again correct to say that Aurangzeb laboured hard to conquer those parts of the country which were yet outside the Mughul empire. But all this endeavour towards the political unification of India was with one aim and that was to convert the whole of it into an Islamic country. None but a perverted intellect would imagine that Aurangzeb wanted the political unity of India for its own sake. The theory of only war-time destruction of temples is a pure invention of his modern apologists and finds no confirmation in contemporary writings. One can easily understand the anxiety of modern Muslim writers to paint their ideal hero, who did so much for their religion, in bright colours, and to make us believe that Islam is a religion of peace and does not sanction forcible conversion, much less religious atrocity committed in its name. Similarly, the desire of a few Hindu scholars to ignore the great injustice done to their religion and culture for the sake of communal harmony and peace in the India of today can also be appreciated. But it may be questioned whether this laudable object can be achieved by falsifying history. Hard facts are more eloquent than logic and facts as given in the contemporary works, including Aurangzeb's own letters and desptaches, reveal an exactly different state of affairs and point to a different conclusion.

The correct picture of Aurangzeb's personality and character has been presented in Sir Jadunath Sarkar's '*History of Aurangzeb*' in 5 volumes, a monumental work which it is impossible to improve upon. Even if fresh material is discovered here after Sir Jadunath's main conclusions about this Mughul ruler shall remain unaltered.

Aurangzeb's private life was almost ideal. He was an extremely industrious man, methodical and disciplined in habits and thought, and an indefatigable worker. In food and dress he was very simple, and the number of his wives in his long life never exceeded the Quaranic limit of four at a time. He was also faithful to conjugal love, had no weakness for women, abstained completely from wine and was free from other defects so common among born aristocrats. Possessed of

an inborn taste for scholarly pursuits, he was a master of Arabic and Persian and could also speak Turki and Hindi with fluency. He was a lover of books and an accurate scholar. He had assiduously cultivated self-control, self-knowledge and self-reverence, and exercised a curb over his tongue and temper. He was humble and considerate and thoroughly devoted to his religion, praying five times every day, keeping the fast of Ramzan and meticulously going through other observances prescribed by the Quran. If there were any defects in his private life, they were his ambition, obstinacy and narrow religious bigotry which made him believe that all others were wrong and he was right, and that all other religions, except Islam, were false.

It is in his dealings with others that Aurangzeb falls short of the commonly recognised standard of a good man. Not endowed with strong family affections and sense of gratitude, he did not prove to be a good son. He deposed and imprisoned his father and brushed aside his piteous appeals without ceremony. We have no evidence to believe that he cherished the memory of his mother. As a brother he can by no standard be called good. He fought and killed his brothers and some of his other male relatives, in some cases in violation of his pledged word. He was a suspicious father who kept his three sons in prison, eldest of whom died in confinement and the second was released after nearly eight year's imprisonment and humiliation. One of his daughters, Zebun-nisa, was similarly thrown into prison to end her miserable life there. Though true to wedded love, he never really showed devotion to any of his wives. In his relations with friends he was cold and reserved. He was, no doubt, considerate and even humble to his superiors when he wanted to gain a point, but normally generosity in politics was folly in his eyes. It is not wonder, therefore, that he was suspicious of all around him and hardly thought it worthwhile to repose confidence in man or woman.

As a soldier and general, Aurangzeb surpassed most monarchs o his dynasty and challenges comparison with Babur and Akbar. He possessed a great physical courage, endurance and coldness of temperament and never refused to risk his person in the thick of a battle. He displayed considerable presence of mind and fearlessness during the Balkh campaign and in the midst of fighting dismounted his horse in order to offer the obligatory *zuhar* prayer. He was a good strategist and always took advantage of his enemy's mistakes and weakness. It

was his habit to make use of stratagems and political cunning to defeat his enemy, as is shown in the case of the Sisodia and Rathor Rajputs whom he deceived by writing a false letter to his son Akbar and letting it fall in the hands of the latter's Rajput allies. He was a past master in diplomacy and statecraft and his judgment and power of resolve were extraordinary. He was fond of discipline and devoted to the business of government in letter and spirit. As an administrator, he bestowed meticulous care on every detail of the business of his government. In fact, he attempted to do all that is humanly possible for a king and gave himself no rest.

In spite of his intellectual acumen, devotion to duty and superhuman industry, Aurangzeb cannot be called a great or a successful ruler of men, for he lacked that supreme quality needed in every king, named, solicitude for the welfare of *all* his subjects. He had a narrow conception of duty, considered himself to be king of Sunni Musalmans only, and treated all non-Muslims in the country as inferior people as long as they did not embrace Islam. In a word, Aurangzeb's ideals was to transform India into an Islamic state. Obsessed by this narrow sense of duty, he laboured all through his life to realise his ambition, but as it turned out he laboured only to destroy and not to build and consequently failed to achieve success. He had no comprehensive programme for the economic and social good of the people. His fiscal policy and social legislation were discriminatory and devised to repress more than three-fourths of his subjects and to reduce them to the status of hewers of wood and drawers of water. In the administration of justice, too, he very often ignored all other considerations except that of serving the cause of his religion. Of the parties to a disputed succession, the one that accepted the king's offer of turning Muslim, was put in possession of a jagir or state whether he was entitled to it or not. A criminal was set free, if he renounced his ancestral religion and embraced Islam. His unalloyed despotism and distrust of others urged him to supervise personally every detail of administration. This reduced his ministers and other high officers to the status of clerks and made them during the long period of his reign helpless puppets without initiative or sense of responsibility. The result was complete administrative degeneration. He did nothing for the cultural regeneration of the country and the development of arts, like architecture, music and painting. Nor did he advance the cause of scholar-

ship to any great extent. During the last twenty years of his reign he even failed to maintain peace and order on account of his engagement in the interminable Dakhin wars, and rebellions broke out in many parts of northern India. Sir Jadunath Sarkar rightly observes that such a ruler cannot be called statesman. When judged as a king, he must be pronounced a failure. He never learnt the first principle of honest kingship, that is, "that there cannot be a great empire without a great people". No individual in the history of India, barring Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the thirties and forties of the present century, ever did so much to widen the gulf between the two principal communities in her population than Aurangzeb.

Whether seen as a private individual or as a king one is struck by two basic qualities in Aurangzeb's character: wordly ambition and religious fanaticism. It is difficult to say whether this 'puritan' monarch would have preferred the kingdom of heaven to the kingdom of India. Probably he prepared himself assiduously and fought stubbornly for the latter in order to be able to establish *his* God's kingdom in India—the Islamic state of the orthodox Sunni Jurist's conception—which was never realized.

Causes of Aurangzeb's failure.

Aurangzeb's administration was a highly centralised despotism with all power concentrated in his hands. As such the success of his government depended mostly on the personal ability and vigour of the sovereign. As long as Aurangzeb possessed physical fitness, things at least seemingly went on well, but in spite of his endeavour to appear in the public darbar and transact business, he, in his old age, began losing his grip over the governors in distant provinces and people everywhere felt that things were passing from his control. That was but inevitable, for such is always the fate of a despotic administration. In the second place, Aurangzeb's genius had its own limitations. However well-read, intelligent and shrewd, he could not always have a correct understanding of the country's problems and devise a correct remedy to meet the emergency. His outlook of life was so narrow that it was not possible for him to take long view of things and legislate accordingly. His study of political problems was coloured by his religious prejudices and consequently his measures were always vitiated. Thirdly, apart from the general defect of outlook Aurangzeb had placed before him a narrow ideal

of duty, and that was to live and function as the king of the Sunni minority only,—in short, as the ruler of an Islamic state, which made it incumbent on him to enforce the Quranic law, reduce the non-muslims in the country to the status of helots and compel them to embrace Islam. However desirable such a policy could be in a purely Muslim country, it was impossible of realisation in India where more than 80% of the people were Hindus with the determination to stick to their ancestral faith and culture which were far older and to them more sublime than any other religion. Little did Aurangzeb realise the opposition he was sure to meet with and the consequences which were sure to follow the abandonment of the traditional policy of religious toleration devised by his great ancestor Akbar. He persecuted the Shias, particularly Ismaili and Daudi Bohras, and put down their teachings and practices. Persian Shias whose genius had shown brilliantly in the revenue and military departments alike, and who had made the reigns of Akbar and Shah Jahan glorious, were discriminated against in the royal service. Fourthly, the emperor failed to train his sons and to share with them the burden of administering his vast empire. His own conduct towards his father had prepared him to expect a similar treatment from his sons who were consequently kept at an arm's length and under strict surveillance. Aurangzeb was highly suspicious of all his sons and daughters and surrounded them by spies who reported every detail of their activities and aspirations. The result was that far from being helpful to their father, the imperial princes not only failed to develop initiative and a sense of responsibility but very often thwarted him and acted against his declared policy. In fact, they repaid the emperor's suspicion by ambitious intrigues against him. Fifthly, his personal ability and industry and long experience of administration, no less than his ambition and jealousy, begot in him a profoundest distrust for his ministers and other officers who, he thought, were not competent enough to carry out their duties as successfully as they should do. On account of this, Aurangzeb attempted to supervise the minutest details of his administration and left merely routine work in the hands of his ministers who, as we have already said before, were thereby reduced to the status of mere clerks and puppets incapable of initiating a policy or taking timely action to meet an emergency. The result was a complete administrative degeneration. The imperial officers looked helplessly to the emperor for orders and guidance in times of crisis and mismanaged the

administration. Sixthly, Aurangzeb committed the mistake of alienating the sympathies of the Rajputs and converting them into his enemies at a time when the empire needed their assistance most. Akbar had made the Rajputs the staunchest supporters of his dynasty and empire by a policy of friendship and religious tolerance. These had not only stood by the imperial throne in times of danger and difficulty, but also carried the Mughul banner to the farthest corners of India and also abroad, and even fought against their own kith and kin to extend the boundaries of the Mughul empire, justifying, as the historian Badayuni says, Mulla Shirin's contention that 'the Hindu wields the sword of Islam'. Aurangzeb's unwise policy turned them into enemies and compelled the Sisodias, Rathors and some other Rajput clans to remain in rebellion till the emperor's death. Seventhly, he provoked other martial elements in the Hindus population, such as, Jats, Sikhs, Bundelas and Marathas who drained the life-blood of the empire and distracted the emperor's attention in times of crisis. Eighthly, his Dakhin policy which aimed at the destruction of the Marathas and the extinction of the Shia kingdoms of that region was a grave blunder. His engagements in the Dakhin wars for 26 long years led to the disorganisation of the central government and gave an opportunity to the disaffected elements in northern India to raise their heads in rebellion which could not be completely crushed. Ninthly, he wrongly imagined that successful rule implied only the conduct of political, military and religious administration of a country and sadly neglected the economic and cultural progress and shunned music, painting and other fine arts. He did practically nothing to improve architecture. Consequently the Indian civilisation during his long rule of about fifty years declined greatly. Tenthly, barring the first 24 years of his reign, he even failed to maintain law and order and to give security of life and property to the teeming millions of this country. In fact, he failed to protect his own camp and followers from the ever-recurring Maratha raids from which fear he was relieved by his death on March 3, 1707.

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CHAPTER IX

RISE OF THE MARATHA POWER

The history of the Mughul empire in India cannot be complete without reference to the rise of the Marathas under their great leader Shivaji, who and his successors played an important part in bringing about the downfall of that empire. In this chapter an attempt has been made to give a connected narrative of the rise of the Maratha power and the institutions which they built up for the governance of the people in their charge.

Marathas before Shivaji.

Before the rise of Shivaji the Marathas, whose original home was Maharashtra, *i.e.*, the western edge of the Dakhin plateau, were scattered like atoms in south India. They were a poor down-trodden people, engaged mainly in agriculture, with a few top-ranking families in the service of the Muslim kingdoms of the Dakhin, and figuring as military commanders and jagirdars. They were granted jagirs and enjoyed the status of second or third-rate nobles at the court of these kingdoms. But as a people, the Marathas had a homogeneous society of their own, which was characterised by social and economic equality, besides a common religion and culture, and outlook on life. There were very few rich men among them and Marathi was their common language and Hinduism their common religion. They were a simple and hardy people, devoted to their faith and hospitable to their guests. They were self-reliant, courageous, brave and proud. Three hundred years' Muslim domination made them more cunning than chivalrous. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Maharashtra witnessed a religious movement which brought forth many religious teachers some of whom belonged to the lower castes and rubbed shoulders with the highest in the country. These teachers preached the Bhakti cult, emphasised the essential equality of all irrespective of caste and economic position, and laboured hard to foster a sense of Hindu unity. The names of Tukaram, Ram Das, Vaman Pandit, Eknath and a few others are even now household words throughout

Maharashtra. Their teachings, some of which were committed to writing, developed the Marathi language and produced a community of creed and life and democratic temper in the people and therefore a solidarity which was unknown elsewhere in the sub-continent of India. The only things wanting to make them a nation were political power and independence which were supplied by Shivaji in the second half of the 17th century. The rise of the Marathas was, therefore, not a sudden or an isolated phenomenon as Grant Duff held in the 19th century; it was the natural result of about two hundred years' preparation under the stress of a religious and social movement which called forth the latent energy of the people and gave them a new life and hope.

Shivaji's birth and boyhood.

Shivaji's ancestors belonged to the Bhonsle clan of the Maratha caste, and were the headmen of the village of Hingani, Beradi and Divalgaon in the Poona district, then in the possession of the Nizam Shahi sultan of Ahmadnagar. The head of this family in the middle of the 16th century was Balaji who had two sons, Maloji and Vitoji. They migrated to the village of Virul (Ellora) situated at the end of the Daulatabad hills and took service as common soldiers under Jadav Rao of Sindh-Kher who was a noble of the sultan of Ahmadnagar. It is said that Jadav Rao one day remarked that Maloji's little son Shahji would be a good match for his own daughter Jijabai, whereupon Maloji asked the guests present to witness that Jadav Rao had betrothed his daughter to his son. Jadav Rao was angry and dismissed Maloji from his service. On return to his village Maloji is said to have discovered a buried treasure in his field and with the help of the money he and his brother recruited one thousand troops and took service under Nimbalkar of Phaltan. Next, he joined the service of the sultan of Ahmadnagar and rose to importance. Jadav Rao of Sind-Kher now saw no harm in giving his daughter Jijabai in marriage to Maloji's son Shahji. This very Shahji rose to be an important commander and noble of Ahmadnagar. He first came to notice during the ministership of Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar, when he was sent to raid the east Khandesh which belonged to the Mughuls. At this time the Mughul emperor Shah Jahan was attempting to conquer the Ahmadnagar kingdom and Shahji took advantage of this opportunity and tried to conquer for himself the country from Junnar to Ahmadnagar. He oined the Mughuls, but left them after a year. Next, he entered

the service of the sultan of Bijapur and won the support of the famous Maratha noble Murari Jagadeva, the right hand man of Khawas Khan, the wazir of Bijapur. As the kingdom of Ahmadnagar was at this time in the process of dissolution, Shahji seized its territory from Poona and Chakan to the vicinity of Ahmadnagar and Nasik. With the assistance of the sultan of Bijapur, he crowned a boy as the king of Ahmadnagar in August 1633 and for three years carried on the government in his name. But in 1636 he was compelled to surrender this boy king to the Mughuls. He finally entered the Bijapur service and carved out "a vast estate for himself in the Mysore plateau and the Eastern Karnatak and rose to be the foremost vassal of the sultan of Bijapur".

Shivaji was the son of this Shahji Bhonsle by his first wife Jijabai. He was born in the hill fort of Shivner, near the city of Junnar, north of Poona, on Monday, 20th April, 1627 (9th March, 1630 according to another and less probable version), and removed to Poona when he was about ten years of age. Jijabai was at this time neglected by Shahji who had married another and a more beautiful lady, Tukabai Mohite, and consequently left the former with her baby, Shivaji, under the guardianship of a devoted steward, Dadaji Kond-deva, first in Shivner and then at Poona, and did not met them for a few years. Jijabai was a highly devout and pious lady. On account of Shahji's neglect, Shivaji and his mother became thoroughly attached to each other and the young boy's love for his mother verged on "almost an adoration for a deity". Shivaji grew up into a fearless boy with no sense of subordination to a higher authority, and was instructed in the Hindu religion and Shastras by his mother and his tutor and guardian Dadaji Kond-deva. He was given military training and became skilled in racing, riding and other military accomplishments. But he did not learn to read and write. Though illiterate, he mastered the contents of the Ramayan and the Mahabharat and the Hindu shastras through the ear. He was fond of participating in religious *kirtans*, and of the society of saints—Hindu or Muslim. Shivaji owed his early administrative training to the instruction and example of Dadaji Kond-deva who was a practical man of affairs. At the age of twelve, he was assigned the jagir of Poona by his father and his marriage with Sai Bai Nimbalkar took place at Banglore (Shahji's headquarters) in or about 1641. The land of Shivaji's birth and early activity, known as Maval country, being full of hills and valleys and studded with forts which often

changed masters, inspired him with the spirit of adventure which gradually developed into patriotic fervour. The people who inhabited the Maval country were mostly Kolis and Marathas; they were very hardy and industrious and formed a good material for a first-class fighting force. Shivaji gathered round him a large number of young men from among these people and started on a career of capturing fort after fort. The decay of Ahmadnagar and the Bijapur kingdoms, the unsettled condition of the country and want of peace and security among the people made Shivaji adopt a career of adventure and have the ambition of acquiring for himself a position of independent sovereignty. It is doubtful whether at this time he conceived any design of standing forth as a liberator of the Hindus from the Muslim domination. Whatever might have been his true intention, he began at an early age capturing the forts in the neighbourhood of Poona. Dadaji Konddeva was filled with grief at his ward's adventure and felt it beneath the dignity of a first-grade noble's son to indulge in such an activity and refused to live the soft and comfortable life of an hereditary grandee. Dadaji died in March 1647 and Shivaji now became his own master at the age of twenty.

His early conquests: Capture of Javli.

Shivaji's first acquisition was the hill fort of Torna from its Bijapur commandant in 1646. He found a treasure of two lakhs of *hun* in this fort and wisely utilised it in raising an army and building a new fort, five miles east of it, which he named Rajgarh. For some time, the Bijapur government could not take any action against him on account of its weakness and also because Shivaji had secured friends at the sultan's court by bribing the ministers. Meanwhile Shivaji acquired the forts of Chakan and Kondana. But about the middle of 1648, his progress was checked by the news that his father was arrested and imprisoned on suspicion of disloyalty by the orders of the sultan of Bijapur. Shivaji had recourse to diplomacy and wrote to prince Murad Bakhsh, the Mughul viceroy of the Dakhin, to put pressure on the sultan of Bijapur to release Shahji. But Shah Jahan refused to do anything in the matter. The sultan, however, released Shahji early in May 1649 after the latter's sons, Shivaji and Vyankoji, had restored the forts of Banglore and Kondana to the sultan's men.

In 1648 Shivaji captured the impregnable fort of Purandar by a stratagem from Niloji Nilkanth whose father had made himself in-

dependent of Bijapur. In 1656 he conquered Javli and built the fort of Raigarh. The estate of Javli, which was in the possession of Chandra Rao More, a Maratha nobleman, lay at extreme north-western corner of the Satara district. Chandra Rao had formed an anti-Shivaji coalition with the Bijapuri governor of that region and blocked Shivaji's expansion in the south and south-west. So Shivaji formed a plot to get rid of him and capture Javli. He secured the murder of Chandra Rao by a hired assassin, attacked Javli immediately after the murder (January 25, 1656) and captured the fort. Chandra Rao's two sons fled, while his manager Hanumant Rao More was stabbed to death. Chandra Rao's sons were compelled to surrender Rairi to which they had fled after the murder of their father. The whole of Javli thus passed into Shivaji's possession, and made it possible for him to look ahead for further conquests.

"The conquest of Javli," writes the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "was the result of deliberate murder and organised treachery on the part of Shivaji. His power was then in its infancy, and he could not afford to be scrupulous in the choice of the means of strengthening himself.....The only redeeming feature of this dark episode in his life is that the crime was not aggravated by hypocrisy. ......Shivaji never pretended that the murder of the three Mores was prompted by a desire to found a Hindu 'Swaraj' or to remove from his path a treacherous enemy who had repeatedly abused his generous leniency."

The conquest of Javli was a landmark in Shivaji's career, as it opened a door for the conquest of the fresh territory south and west of his newly established kingdom. Secondly, it greatly increased the strength of his military establishment, as many thousands of Mavle infantry of the Mores entered Shivaji's service. Besides, the annexation of Javli made him the master of the Maval region which was a fine recruiting ground for his troops. Thirdly, he acquired a huge treasure that the Mores had accumulated for generations. In April 1656, he captured the strong fort of Raigarh from Chandra Rao More and made it the seat of his government. Early in October he obtained possession of the district of Supa, 35 miles south-east of Poona, by a *coup d' etat* compelling his maternal uncle (his step-mother's brother) who was in charge of it to flee to Shahji for shelter.

First clash with the Mughuls, 1657.

Shivaji for the first time came into clash with the Mughuls early in 1657, when Aurangzeb, viceroy of the Mughul Dakhin, invaded Bijapur. As the prince was seducing important Bijapur nobles and officers, Shivaji also offered his services to him on the condition that (a) he should be recognised as the legal master of the Bijapuri forts and territory which he had conquered, and (b) also of the port of Dabhol and the territory apertaining to it that he had recently annexed. Aurangzeb sent a diplomatic reply ; and Shivaji, feeling that his interest would be better served by creating a diversion in favour of Bijapur, attacked and raided the south-western corner of the Mughul Dakhin while Aurangzeb was engaged in the siege of Kalyani beyond the south-eastern corner of his viceroyalty. The Marathas raided the Chamergunda and Raisin districts to the very gates of the city of Ahmadnagar. At the same time Shivaji personally led an expedition to Junnar and carried away three lakhs of *hun* in cash. Aurangzeb was obliged to detach a part of his army to drive away the Maratha raiders and take steps for the defence of the south-western frontier of Mughul Dakhin. Shivaji submitted after Bijapur had made peace with the Mughuls but Aurangzeb did not really forgive him.

Conquest of Konkan, 1657.

After Aurangzeb's departure for northern India to fight for the throne, Shivaji got an opportunity to extend his dominions. In August 1657, he sent an army to attack the Sidis of Janjira which, however, did not succeed. Towards the end of the year he invaded northern Konkan which consisted of the modern districts of Thana and Kolaba. Shivaji easily captured the towns of Kalyan and Bhivandi which he converted into naval bases. He made himself the master of northern Konkan where he established regular administration. His troops plundered the neighbouring Portuguese territory of Daman which compelled the latter to promise the Maratha King an annual tribute. It was at Kalyan that a beautiful Muslim girl said to be the daughter-in-law of Mulla Ahmad Nawayat, the Bijapuri governor of the district, was seized by the Maratha troops among the booty and offered to Shivaji as a present. The Maratha King refused to dishonour her, treated her kindly, and sent her with ornaments and dresses back to her people in Bijapur.

Afzal Khan episode, 1659.

The Bijapur government which had suffered a considerable loss of her territory and forts at the hands of Shivaji, at last summoned courage and appointed Abdulla Bhatari, entitled Afzal Khan, who was a first-rate noble and general, to put down Shivaji. The general boasted in the open court that "he would bring Shivaji back a captive in chains without having once to dismount from his own horse." He attempted to seduce the deshmukhs of the Maval country and officers and troops of Shivaji, and some of the deshmukhs actually joined him. Leaving Bijapur in September 1659, Afzal Khan reached Pandharpur and destroyed the images in the temple of Vithoba. Thence he proceeded to Wai and realised a fine of two lakhs of rupees from Bajaji Nayak Nimbalkar for having sided with Shivaji. He sent his troops to rob and desecrate the Hindu temples of the locality. With the help of the Mores of Javli, who were Shivaji's enemies, Afzal Khan resolved to penetrate into the Maval country and attack Shivaji in Poona. But as Shivaji had taken his stand in the jungle district of Javli, Afzal Khan gave up his policy of a direct attack and tried to lure Shivaji into a trap and therefore proceeded to Pratapgarh and encamped there. He sent Krishnaji Bhaskar to Shivaji to request him to come and see him (Afzal) promising to get Shivaji confirmed in the possession of Konkan and the forts which he then held. The message added: "I shall secure for yourself further distinctions and military equipment from our government. If you wish to attend the court, you will be welcomed. Or, if you want to be excused make personal attendance there, and you will be exempted."

The Maratha court was divided on the policy to be adopted against Afzal Khan. Shivaji's officers advised submission, but he, brushing aside the advice, resolved to confront the invader boldly. He got scent of Afzal Khan's teacherous design from Krishnaji Bhaskar and accepted his proposal of an interview on the condition that the latter gave him a solemn assurance of safety. Afzal Khan gave the assurance demanded. Shivaji's envoy Pantaji Gopinath who was sent to ascertain the Khan's intentions reported on his return that Afzal Khan had made arrangements for his arrest at the interview. It was decided on the suggestions of Shivaji that the interview should take place at the village of Par which lay one mile south of Pratapgarh. Afzal Khan moved to Par where on an imminence below the fort a pavilion was set up for the proposed meeting. Shivaji concealed his

picked troops in the forest on both the sides of the path leading to the pavilion and started for the meeting, wearing a coat of chain-armour under his tunic and a steel cap under his turban. He concealed in his left hand a set of steel claws (*baghnakh*) and in his right sleeve a small sharp dagger called scorpion or *bichhwa*. He had two companions with him, namely, Jiv Mahala and Shambhuji Kavji who were armed each with two swords and a shield.

Afzal Khan came to the place accompanied by a strong escort of more than a thousand musketeers. Shivaji's envoy Gopi Nath requested the Khan to keep his army at a safe distance lest Shivaji should refuse to come for the meeting. This was done and Afzal Khan, like Shivaji, came to the pavilion with two armed attendants. He wanted to have a third man, named Sayyid Banda (a noted swordsman), but the latter was removed from the tent on Shivaji's protest. As Shivaji reached the edge of the pavilion, he bowed in salutation. Afzal Khan advanced a few steps, embraced Shivaji and as the latter came up to his shoulders, he bent a little to tighten his grasp in order to strangle him, and taking out his sword stuck a blow at the side of Shivaji. But as the Maratha chief had worn an armour under his coat, the blow produced no effect. Recovering from the surprise, Shivaji tore Afzal Khan's bowel open with the steel claws and quickly plunged his *bichhwa* into Afzal Khan's side. Badly wounded Afzal Khan relaxed his grip and Shivaji extracting himself ran towards his two attendants who were standing below the platform. Afzal Khan cried out in agony and Sayyid Banda stepping forward gave a blow of his sword on Shivaji's head which did no harm on account of the hidden steel cap. Jiv Mahala, meanwhile, cut off the right hand of the Sayyid and killed him. The incident occurred on 2nd November, 1659.

The Maratha troops who were concealed in the jungle now fell on the leaderless Bijapuri army which offered a desperate resistance, but was badly defeated and put to flight. Three hundred of them were slain and the remaining escaped. Shivaji obtained possession of an immense booty consisting of artillery, ammunition, treasure, elephants, horses and camels and the entire baggage of Afzal Khan's army. The booty included ten lakhs of rupees in cash and jewels. After this victory Shivaji held a grand review and rewarded all those who had played an important part in the episode.

Shivaji followed up his victory by sending his troops into south Konkan and the Kolhapur district. He captured the fort of Panhala and defeated another Bijapuri army under Rustam Zaman and Fazl Khan, son of Afzal Khan. Vasantgarh, Khelna, Pangna and other forts in the vicinity were also taken. At the end of January 1660, he victoriously returned to Raigarh laden with a huge booty.

Loss of Panhala and Chakan, 1660.

Being alarmed the sultan of Bijapur directed Sidi Jauhar, who was in charge of the district of Karnool, to undertake an expedition against Shivaji. He was assisted by Baji Ghorpade, Rustam-i-Zaman, Fazl Khan and several other officers. The Sidi invested Shivaji in the fort of Panhala and pressed the siege with vigour. Shivaji entered into an understanding with the Sidi, but as Fazl Khan was a sworn enemy of the Maratha chief, he did every thing in his power to capture the fort and Shivaji had to escape to Vishalgarh which lay 27 miles to the west of Panhala. Panhala fell on 2nd October, 1660. Shivaji also lost the fort of Chakan, 18 miles north of Poona to the Mughuls who were attacking his territory in the north, at the very time when Bijapuris were besieging him in Panhala.

Night attack on Shayista Khan, April 1663.

The Mughul emperor Aurangzeb, who had now emerged successful from the war of succession, appointed Shayista Khan, his maternal uncle, as governor of the Dakhin, with instructions to root out the newly established Maratha power. Before undertaking the campaign, Shayista Khan instigated the Bijapuris to make an attack on the Maratha dominions in the south, so as to crush Shivaji between two simultaneous invasions. The Khan left Ahmadnagar early in March 1660, towards Poona and gradually captured the forts between that city and Poona. There was little organised Maratha resistance until the Khan had arrived at Saswad, ten miles south-east of Poona. Shayista Khan entered Poona on 19th May, and wanted to pass the rainy season there. But as the country in the neighbourhood had been completely devastated by the Marathas he decided to besiege the fort of Chakan, 18 miles north of Poona, so as to be able to draw supplies from Ahmadnagar, and captured it on 25th August. During this period Shivaji at Rajgarh formed a plan to compensate himself for his loss of the district of Poona and the forts of Chakan and Panhala. He

defeated a detachment of Shayista Khan's army under Talab Khan who was sent to occupy those parts of Konkan which were in Maratha hands. After this, Shivaji sent a part of his army under Netaji to act against the Mughuls, while he himself invaded the Bijapuri territory in Konkan. He occupied the entire country from Danda-Rajpuri to Khare-Patan at one rapid sweep. Little resistance was offered and most of the cities of the Ratnagiri district saved themselves from plunder by paying him *chauth*. Next he conquered the Palli-Wana state and fortified Chirdurg. After this he captured Shringarpur, the ruler of which, Surya Rao, fled to save his life. These brilliant successes were, however, marred by the loss of the city of Kalyan which was recaptured by the Mughuls. Nevertheless, as the result of two years' warfare Shivaji succeeded in bringing under his possession the southern Konkan which includes south-eastern corner of the Kolaba district and almost the whole of the Ratnagiri district.

Shivaji now planned a night attack on Shayista Khan who had returned to Poona in August 1660, after capturing Chakan and taken up his residence in the very house where Shivaji had passed his childhood. Accompanied by 400 chosen troops, the Maratha chief left Singhgarh and reached Poona after nightfall on 15th April, 1663. Questioned by the Mughul guards while he was entering the limits of Shayista Khan's camp, he replied that they were Maratha soldiers of the imperial army and were going to their appointed places. The party reached Shayista Khan's quarters at mid-night and entered into the house by breaking open a small door which had been closed with bricks and mud. Shivaji was the first to enter and was followed by 200 of his men. Having reached the Khan's bed-room he made an attack on him. Shayista Khan had just been roused and was arming himself when the attack was made and he escaped in the darkness losing his thumb. The Marathas killed many women in the Khan's harem in the darkness without knowing their sex. The other half of Shivaji's army 200 strong, meanwhile, fell on the main guards outside Shayista Khan's harem and caused great confusion among the Mughul troops. Shayista Khan's son Abdul Fatah hurried to his father's assistance but was slain. The same was the fate of other Mughul captains. Now that all the Mughul troops were awake, Shivaji collected his men and left the camp and the confounded Mughuls could not pursue the Marathas. The night attack was a complete success. Shayista

Khan had lost one of his sons, 40 of his attendants, 6 of his wives and slave-girls; 2 of his other sons and 8 other women were among the wounded. This happened on 15th April, 1663. Shivaji's prestige soared up very high, while Shayista Khan was seized with humiliation. Aurangzeb was enraged and punished him by transferring him to Bangal.

Sack of Surat, 1664.

After this bold adventure Shivaji undertook a greater feat by making a forced march to Surat, the richest port in the country and plundering it. The plan was kept a closely guarded secret, and while he declared that he was proceeding towards the south, he actually moved towards the north. Leaving Nasik on 10th January (1st January O.S.), 1664, he made a dash for Surat travelling at a lightening speed. The city was filled with alarm and many people fled with their families for safety outside. Inayat Khan, the governor, left the town and took shelter in the fort and sent his agent to treat with Shivaji who had arrived in the morning of 16th January and encamped in a garden outside the Burhanpur Gate. He detained the envoy and plundered the city for four days. Thousands of houses were burnt to ashes and two-thirds of the town was destroyed. The cowardly Mughul governor hired an assassin to murder Shivaji, but the attack failed as the assassin's right hand was cut off by one of Shivaji's body-guards. The enraged Maratha troops wanted to start a general massacre of the people but Shivaji forbade it and only cut off the hands of a few prisoners. The English merchants defended their factory and did not pay a ransom of three lakhs of rupees imposed upon them by the Maratha chief. Shivaji had acquired so much of booty that he did not care to send a reply to the English or attack their fortified factory. The plunder acquired from Surat amounted to more than a crore of rupees. As the English wrote, Shivaji "scorned to carry away anything but gold, silver, pearls, diamonds and such precious wares". On the 19th Shivaji received news that a Mughul force was coming rapidly for the relief of the town and, therefore, he left Surat suddenly on 20th January, 1664. Shivaji's plea for the sack of Surat was his revenge for the Mughul invasion of his country. Another cause was love of money.

Shivaji enjoyed immunity from the Mughul attack throughout 1664. Prince Muazzam, governor of the Mughul Dakhin, remained

encamped at Aurangabad and Jaswant Singh at Poona, and the latter besieged the fort of Kondana, but failed to capture it, and Shivaji was practically free to roam about and harass the Mughuls. He plundered Ahmadnagar early in August and invaded Kanara after the rainy season.

Shahji died on February 2, 1664, and his second son Vyankoji succeeded to his estate in Mysore and the Eastern Karnatak.

Jai Singh's invasion of Maharashtra ; Treaty of Purandar, 1665.

Stung by Shayista Khan's failure and the sack of Surat Aurangzeb appointed his bravest general Mirza Raja Jai Singh of Amber to put down Shivaji, placed under him a host of able officers, and liberally equipped him with money and material. The Raja had an unbroken record of victories in war and diplomacy both in India and Central Asia, and was famous for his courage and ability, besides foresight, political cunning and cool calculating policy. These qualities added to his personal charm and the fact of his being a Hindu made him an ideal general for a contest with Shivaji. He crossed the Narmada on 19th January, 1665, and without wasting time entered Poona on 13th March and took over charge from Jaswant Singh of Marwar. Conscious of the enormity of his task, Jai Singh chalked out a comprehensive plan of action against Shivaji and took up his position in the eastern part of the latter's dominion so as to be between the Maratha territory and that of the sultan of Bijapur whom he wanted to prevent from assisting the Marathas. In fact, the Raja, anxious to instigate all important elements in the Dakhin against Shivaji so as to distract his attention by attacks from all possible quarters, asked for the assistance of the sultan of Bijapur, holding out a prospect of imperial favour and reduction of his tribute. He asked the Portuguese of Goa and Sidi of Janjira to attack Shivaji' territory, and won over many zamindars of Maharashtra and Karnatak by liberal offers. In this he achieved a great success. All those who bore a grudge to Shivaji, such as the Mores who were expelled from Javli, Fazl Khan, son of Afzal Khan and the expelled rajas of the Koli country north of Kalyan, joined Jai Singh.

From Saswad as his base Jai Singh began his campaign sending a detachment of his army to ravage the Maratha villages in the

valleys to the south-west of that town. He then proceeded to besiege Shivaji in Purandar and launched his attack on Vajragarh which was a sister fort and lay on a bridge east of Purandar. It was completely invested. Batteries were set up and bombardment commenced. The raja captured Vajragarh on 22nd April and wisely allowed the garrison to leave for their homes without molestation in order to tempt the garrison of Purandar to surrender without fighting. Jai Singh had already sent flying columns of his army to ravage Shivaji's villages in the regions of Rajgarh, Singhgarh (Kondana) and Rohira and not to leave any trace of cultivation or habitation. These columns performed their task to the Raja's satisfaction, defeated the Maratha troops and looted and burnt the villages, some of which had never before been visited by an enemy. Meanwhile, the siege of Purandar continued and the Maratha attempt to raise it proved futile. After the capture of Vajragarh, Jai Singh ordered his men to advance along the connecting ridge and besiege the lower fort (Machi) of Purandar. Trenches were dug at north-eastern angle of the fort and the Maratha sorties were repelled. Jai Singh had a high wooden platform of logs and planks prepared and small guns mounted on it so as to bombard the fort and silence the enemy activity. In spite of the obstruction created by the garrison, the wooden platform was ready. The Mughuls now tried to storm the the White Tower which the Marathas had to vacate owing to heavy fire and to retire into the Black Tower behind. Even there they could not stand and had to fall back in a stockade adjoining the wall of the tower. They were compelled to abandon it too and take shelter in the trenches behind. Thus as the result of two months' siege and fighting Jai Singh captured five towers and one stockade of the lower fort, and it became clear that the main fort of Purandar could not defy him for long. The Rajput general now concentrated his troops on the main fort, and in one of the sorties made by the Marathas their gallant commander Murar Baji Prabhu lost his life with 300 of his men after slaying 500 Pathans and many infantry men. A grim fate seemed to await the garrison and the families of the Maratha officers in Purandar.

The unprecedented reverses suffered by his troops in the siege of Purandar as well as by raids in the very heart of his dominion compelled Shivaji to decide to make peace by offering to submit. He had for some time exchanged envoys with Jai Singh and now he

resolved to see the Rajput chief and offer terms, and if his offer was rejected he would join the sultan of Bijapur and continue the war with the Mughuls to the bitter end. Jai Singh insisted on Shivaji's coming in person and making an unconditional surrender and then only he would consider the proposal for a treaty. After Jai Singh had promised him a safe conduct Shivaji proceeded on the morning of 24th June, 1665, to meet the Rajput general in his camp. Jai Singh, however, sent word that unless Shivaji agreed to surrender all his forts, he need not come for an interview. Shivaji agreed and proceeded on and was welcomed at the door of the tents by Jai Singh's Bakhshi. Jai Singh himself advanced a few steps, embraced Shivaji and seated him by his side. Jai Singh had instructed Dilir Khan and Kirat Singh to launch an attack on Purandar, while Shivaji was with him so as to convince the latter of the hopelessness of the Maratha position. This was done and a Maratha sortie was repulsed with the loss of eighty Marathas killed and many wounded. Shivaji who could see the fighting from the Rajput camp, offered to surrender Purandar and begged Jai Singh to stop the useless slaughter of his men. Accordingly, Jai Singh instructed his men to stop fighting and Shivaji sent one of his officers to ask the garrison to capitulate. These orders were complied with.

The two rajas negotiated terms till mid-night and came to an agreement. This is known as the treaty of Purandar of 1665. Its terms were: (1) Shivaji surrendered 23 forts and the territory appertaining to them which yielded an annual revenue of four lakhs of *hun*. These were annexed to the Mughul empire. (2) Twelve of Shivaji's forts including Rajgarh and the land appertaining to them with an annual revenue of one lakh of *hun* was allowed to remain in his possession "on condition of service and loyalty to the imperial throne". (3) Shivaji was exempted from personal attendance at the Mughul court, but his son Shambhuji was to serve the emperor with a contingent of 5,000 horse and was to be paid by grant of a jagir. Shivaji, however, promised to fight for the empire in the Dakhin.

To the treaty of Purandar was added subsequently another clause which in the words of Shivaji ran as follows:—"If lands yielding four lakhs of *hun* a year in the lowlands of Konkan and five lakhs of *hun* a year in the upland (Balaghat Bijapuri) are granted

to me by the emperor and I am assured by an imperial *farman* that the possession of these lands will be confirmed in me after the expected Mughul conquest of Bijapur, then I agree to pay to the emperor forty lakhs of *hun* in thirteen yearly instalments." This was assented to by Aurangzeb and it was expected that Shivaji would conquer the above territories from Bijapur without Mughul assistance. This clause was highly favourable to the Mughuls, for besides securing for them two crores of rupees in cash it was sure to make Shivaji and the sultan of Bijapur perpetual enemies. Moreover, Shivaji by engaging himself in the task of conquering the mountainous regions would have no time to give any trouble to the Mughuls in the Dakhin. It is to be noted that in return for the concession involved in the above clause Shivaji agreed "to assist the Mughuls in the invasion of Bijapur with 2,000 cavalry of his son Shambhuji's mansab and 7,000 expert infantry under his own command". Aurangzeb accorded his approval to the treaty of Purandar and the subsequent agreement and sent a *farman* and a robe of honour for Shivaji.

Shivaji helps the Mughuls, but fails before Panhala.

After this conspicuous success, Jai Singh invaded Bijapur with the object of capturing the capital of the Adil Shahi kingdom by a sudden *coup*. In accordance with the agreement Shivaji assisted him with a powerful army. The Rajput chief met with no opposition till his arrival at Mangalbira, 24 miles north of Bijapur. The Bijapuris had made every preparation for defence, collected large quantities of provisions and material in the fort and ravaged the country for a radius of seven miles so as not to leave water, grain and even trees. Jai Singh found his advance stopped at Makhnapur, ten miles north of Bijapur fort. He waited for a few weeks after which he was compelled to abandon the campaign and begin his retreat on 15th January, 1666. He had not brought heavy artillery, thinking that he would easily capture Bijapur by a sudden *coup*, but he was mistaken. So he retreated and sent Shivaji to besiege Panhala. With the intention of delivering a surprise attack on Panhala, Shivaji reached the vicinity of the fort on 26th January, but as his companion, Netaji, who was known 'second Shivaji', failed to reach in time, he made an assault three hours before sunrise. The garrison was awake and fought bravely with the result that Shivaji had to return without capturing the fort. He took Netaji to task and therefore the latter took offence and went over to the service of Bijapur

and raided the Mughul territory. Jai Singh won him back by the promise of a mansab of 5,000, a handsome jagir, and rupees 50,000 in cash.

Shivaji's visit to Agra, 1666.

Jai Singh's failure against Bijapur, the defection of Netaji and his fear lest Shivaji himself should join Bijapur and turn against the Mughuls, made him persuade the Maratha chief to visit the emperor at Agra. This he did in order to remove Shivaji temporarily from the Dakhin, to put an end to the intrigues among his own officers, some of whom were hostile to Shivaji, and to retrieve his reputation with the emperor by showing that he had been instrumental in sending to the court a man like Shivaji who had abhorred bending his head before any Muslim, however great he might be. He took pains to convince Shivaji of the high honours that he would receive at Agra and most probably held out the promise of his being sent back as the viceroy of the Mughul Dakhin. Shivaji coveted Janjira from the Sidis and Jai Singh probably promised its cession to him. Shivaji, however, accepted Jai Singh's offer only after long hesitation and after the Rajput chief and his son Ram Singh who was latter's representative at the court, had pledged their word for safety. Before starting, he appointed his mother Jijabai as Regent and placed the peshwa Moro Pant and Majumdar Niloji Sondev under her orders. He prescribed duties for all his officers and commandants of his forts and instructed them to follow the current rules and regulations and act on their own initiative in emergencies. He began his journey on 16th March, 1666, with his eldest son Shambhuji, five high officers and a small escort of 350 select troops.

Having reached Sarai Manikchand, a few miles south of Agra on 21st May, he was received there by Ram Singh's *munshi*, Girdhar Lal. As Ram Singh's duty of patrolling the imperial palace fell early in the morning of the next day (22nd May), he could not proceed to receive Shivaji in person. Girdhar Lal conducted Shivaji into the city of Agra by one route, while Ram Singh after his patrol duty proceeded by another route to welcome Shivaji in advance and conduct him to the emperor. On account of this mistake instead of receiving Shivaji outside the town, he met him near the central market. As it was late in the day and Aurangzeb had left Diwan-i-Am and retired to Diwan-i-Khas, Shivaji was presented to him

there by Asad Khan, the assistant Mir Bakhshi. Shivaji presented one thousand mohars and two thousand rupees as nazar, besides five thousand rupees as nisar. Aurangzeb only looked at him, but said nothing. After having presented the nazar, Shivaji was led back and made to stand in the row of the mansabdars of 5,000 which was the third line of the nobles. The Maratha chief was tired and dissatisfied for not having been welcomed on behalf of the emperor outside the capital. Now he was made to stand in the third row, and when he learnt that Maharaja Jaswant Singh was standing in front of him, he flared up, "Jaswant Singh, whose back my soldiers have seen ! I have to stand behind him? What does it mean?" Then came the time of the presentation of robes of honour. The royal princes, the wazir and others including Jaswant Singh were honoured with these robes, but not Shivaji. Now the Maratha chief was filled with anger. Aurangzeb noticed the commotion and inquired of Ram Singh as to what the matter with Shivaji was. When the latter went to him, Shivaji burst forth in anger, "You have seen, your father has seen, your Padishah had seen what sort of man I am, and yet you have wilfully made me stand up so long. I cast off your mansab." Having uttered these words "he then and there turned back to the throne and rudely walked away. Ram Singh caught hold of his hand, but Shivaji wrenched it away, came to one side (behind the pillars) and sat down there." Ram Singh failed to persuade him to return to the darbar and to all his entreaties Shivaji only said that he was prepared to die, but would never again go to the emperor's presence. Thus baffled Ram Singh reported the matter to Aurangzeb who sent three nobles with a robe of honour to pacify Shivaji and bring him back to his presence. Shivaji refused to put on this dress and refused to go back to the darbar. The nobles diplomatically reported the failure of their mission to the emperor saying that rustic Maratha chief had fallen ill on account of unaccustomed heat of the darbar. Aurangzeb, therefore, ordered Ram Singh to take Shivaji back with him to his residence. Even the next day Shivaji did not agree to go to court and sent his son Shambhuji after a prolonged persuasion by Ram Singh. He never again set his foot in a Mughul darbar.

Aurangzeb now decided to imprison Shivaji and have him slain on one pretext or another. But he wanted to do it in such a manner as not to rouse public opinion or earn the enmity of the

Rajputs, particularly of Jai Singh and his son Ram Singh who had pledged their word of honour for the Maratha chief's safety. The emperor's decision was strengthened by the intrigues in his harem and by the age-long Kachhwaha-Rathor rivalry for precedence at the court. The wives of Shayista Khan and wazir Jafar Khan who were related to the royal family and the emperor's sister Jahanara clamoured for Shivaji's blood. The Rathor party headed by Jaswant Singh desired the disgrace of Jai Singh, and hence was against Shivaji who was the former's protege. Consequently, it was decided by the emperor "either to kill Shivaji or to confine him in a fortress". First of all, guards were placed around his residence; next the emperor ordered Shivaji to be removed to the house of Radandaz Khan who was notorious for his brutality and was in charge of the state prisoners in the Agra Fort. But Ram Singh protested and therefore Aurangzeb allowed Shivaji to remain in the Jaipur House on Ram Singh's signing a security bond regarding the Maratha chief's conduct at Agra. But Aurangzeb was not really satisfied and ordered Shivaji to accompany Radandaz Khan to fight the Yusufzai and Afridi tribes in Afghanistan. The emperor's object was to have Shivaji murdered on the way and deceive the world by announcing his death due to accident. But as Aurangzeb was awaiting Jai Singh's reply to his inquiry as to what promises he had made to Shivaji, the above plan could not at once be put into execution. Meanwhile, Shivaji won over the Mughul wazir and other high officers by huge bribes and submitted a petition through the former begging pardon for his past conduct. The emperor did not pardon him, but cancelled his order for sending him to Afghanistan. Next, Shivaji offered the emperor two crores of rupees, if he was permitted to return home and if all his forts were restored to him. He also promised to fight against Bijapur. Aurangzeb disregarded the petition and posted a large army with artillery under Sidi Faulad, the police kotwal of Agra, outside Shivaji's residence, whereas Ram Singh's men watched him inside day and night. Shivaji now became a prisoner. Left to his own resources, he devised a plan of escape from Agra. He made Ram Singh withdraw the security bond that he had given to the emperor. Next, he sent away all his troops back to the Dakhin, and announced his intention to turn a hermit and requested the emperor to allow him to go to Allahabad to pass his life there. Aurangzeb replied that he would be lodged in the Allahabad Fort where the Mughul governor "will take good care of him".

Shivaji now pretended to be ill and began sending out of his residence baskets of sweetmeats for Brahmans and other religious men. In the afternoon of 29th August (19 O.S.) he and his son Shambhuji went out in two baskets slung from a pole and carried by two men on their shoulder under the pretext that they were baskets of sweetmeats. Shivaji's half-brother Hiroji Farzand who resembled him was made to lie on his bed with his right arm outstretched and adorned with the Maratha chief's gold wristlet. The baskets reached a lonely spot outside Agra from where Shivaji and his son walked to a village six miles from the city. There Niraji Raoji was present with horses. The party now disguised themselves as Hindu Sanyasis and rode to Mathura. At Mathura Shivaji left Shambhuji in the charge of a Maratha family resident there, and himself proceeded eastwards to Allahabad and from there he took the road to Bundelkhand and through Gondwana and Golkunda he returned to Rajgarh where he reached on 22nd September, 1666, the twenty-fifth day of his escape from Agra.

At Agra Shivaj's flight became known at about ten in the morning of 30th August, two hours after Hiroji had quietly walked out of the house asking the guards not to make noise, as Shivaji was ill. Faulad Khan in reporting the matter to the emperor said that Shivaji had vanished all of a sudden from the sight of his men and either flew into the sky or disappeared into the earth by a magical trick. Aurangzeb refused to believe it and sent round men to watch the roads to the Dakhin and arrest the fugitive wherever he could be found. But all the search and toil proved of no avail. The emperor believed that the Maratha chief had fled through the connivance of Ram Singh. So he forbade him the court and then dismissed him from his post. Jai Singh in the Dakhin was filled with anxiety and felt that all his work was undone and his reputation gone. During Shivaji's captivity his great anxiety was the Maratha chief's safety for which he had pledged his word. Now he was worried about the future of himself and his son. He wrote to the emperor that he would inveigle Shivaji to an interview and have him killed. But Aurangzeb who was to regret Shivaji's flight the whole of his life, was not satisfied and removed Jai Singh from the Dakhin. The Raja made over charge to prince Muazzam and died at Burhanpur on September 7, 1667 on his way back to Agra.

Peace with the Mughuls, 1667-69.

Shivaji's health had been impaired on account of imprisonment and arduous journey, and on his return he twice fell ill and had to take long rest. Moreover, prince Muazzam, the new governor, was an easy-going man and his right hand man Jaswant Singh was friendly to Shivaji. They were averse to useless war of aggression in the Dakhin. Aurangzeb too had his hands full on account of the threat of a Persian invasion and a fearful revolt of the Yusufzais and other tribes in the north-west frontier to suppress which he had to detach hosts of his troops. For these reasons Shivaji remained quiet for about three years. Some months after his return he wrote to Aurangzeb offering to fight for the empire. He contacted Jaswant Singh also, promising to send Shambhuji to serve prince Muazzam if he were pardoned by the emperor. Aurangzeb accepted prince Muazzam's recommendation for a peace and recognised Shivaji's title of 'Raja'.

Shivaji utilised these years (1667-69) in consolidating his kingdom by internal reforms. He reorganised his administration and framed a set of very wise regulations which strengthened his government and served the best interests of his people. These will be described at the end of the chapter.

Renewal of war with the Mughuls, 1670.

The peace with the Mughuls was a mere truce. Shivaji's object in entering into it was to take time and prevent the possibility of a combined attack by the Mughuls, Bijapur and Golkunda. Aurangzeb too was not sincere; being suspicious of Muazzam's friendship with Shivaji, he planned to entrap the latter a second time. If he failed in this, he would imprison Shambhuji and keep him as a hostage. A rupture occurred as Shivaji took in his service the troops who had been disbanded by the Mughul viceroy of the Dakhin on account of financial reasons, and also because Aurangzeb attempted to recover one lakh of rupees which had been advanced to Shivaji for his journey to Agra in 1666 by attaching a part of his new jagir in Berar. Shivaji, therefore, recalled his troops from the service and prepared an attack on the Mughul territory. He recovered several forts that he had surrendered by the treaty of Purandar. Of these the most important was the fort of Kondana which was captured by Tanaji Malusare by scaling the wall. Tanaji

lost his life after his glorious success in the venture and Shivaji named the fort after him as Singhgarh (Feb. 1670). Purandar was next to fall and subsequently Kalyan, Bhivandi, Mahuli and others. Shivaji had detached sections of his army to plunder the various parts of the Mughul territory. He himself plundered 51 villages near Ahmadnagar, Junnar and Parenda. The Maratha success was due to Shivaji's daring, highly efficient army and to the dissensions between prince Muazzam and Dilir Khan. Taking advantage of the quarrel between the prince and Dilir Khan which took the shape of a civil war, Shivaji made a rapid march and plundered Surat a second time on 13th October, 1670. The plunder lasted for three days, and Shivaji returned with a huge booty estimated at sixty-six lakhs of rupees. The most valuable port in the country suffered a great injury and its trade was practically destroyed. Daud Khan Qureshi attempted to intercept Shivaji while the latter was returning from Surat. But the Maratha chief managed to send home his booty safely by a ruse and defeated Daud Khan.

Shivaji followed up his success by a sudden irruption into Barar, Baglan and Khandesh. In December 1670, he raided Khandesh and captured some of the forts of the Baglan district. His commander-in-chief, Pratap Rao Gujar, plundered Bahadurpur and riding into Barar looted the city of Karanja. From this time Shivaji began levying *chauth* on the Mughul territory through which he passed. He declared that Maharashtra belonged to him and not to the Mughuls. He sent Peshwa Moro Pant Pingle into Baglan and the latter captured Trimbak and some other forts, and besieged the fort of Salher on the border of Khandesh and Gujarat. Shivaji joined him in this enterprise and Salher was captured on 15th January, 1671.

Shivaji's devastating activity roused Aurangzeb who sent Mahabat Khan to the Dakhin and directed Bahadur Khan of Gujarat to join him. But this general too failed to dislodge the Maratha chief and was recalled by the emperor who appointed Bahadur Khan and Dilir Khan to take charge of the Dakhin expedition. These besieged Salher. Leaving some troops to conduct the siege, the two Mughul generals made a rapid march to Poona and Supa and plundered the former town. Shivaji, without being disturbed, played such a havoc on the Mughul troops in Khandesh

that Bahadur and Dilir were compelled to hurry back from Poona to the assistance of Ikhlas Khan who was reduced to great straits before the walls of Salher. In a sanguinary battle before Salher, the Mughuls were completely routed (February 1672), and Salher and Mulher were re-occupied by the Marathas. Aurangzeb was grieved to hear of the Mughul defeat at Salher and reprimanded Bahadur Khan and Dilir Khan.

After the capture of Salher and Mulher, Peshwa Moro Pant descended into north Konkan and in June 1672, conquered Jawahar and Ramnagar. Most of the forts in Baglan, except Shivner, Shivaji's birth-place, surrendered to the Marathas. Bahadur Khan and Dilir Khan made every attempt to check the expansion of the Maratha kingdom, transferred their headquarters from Aurangabad to Pedgaon on the Bhima, east of Poona, and constructed a large fort there (Bahadurgarh) so as to threaten Shivaji from the convenient base, but failed in their designs.

Towards the end of 1672, there was again a rupture between Shivaji and Bijapur. The Maratha chief coveted the fort of Panhala which was indispensable for the security of the southern part of his dominion and sent Anaji Datto against it. The latter along with Kondaji Bavlekar made an assault on Panhala during the night of 16th March, 1673. The Marathas scaled the wall by means of rope ladders and opened the gate of the fort. Then they attacked the guards and killed the chief commandant Babu Khan and captured the fortress with a vast amount of wealth that was buried there. Satara and Parli followed suit. The sultan made an attempt to recover Panhala and dispatched Bahlol Khan with a powerful army for the purpose. But the Maratha commander-in-chief Pratap Rao Gujar cut off his supplies and entrapped him. Being beaten, Bahlol Khan begged for quarter and was allowed to go away; but he broke his word and again took up an offensive against the Marathas. Shivaji took his commander-in-chief to task for his misplaced generosity in allowing Bahlol Khan to escape unscathed. Pratap Rao's pride was sorely touched and he challenged Bahlol Khan for a fight and in order to draw him out of his strong position plundered the town of Hubli. Bahlol Khan and Sarza Khan proceeded to save the Bijapur territory and were encountered by Pratap Rao who accompanied by only six troopers fell on Bahlol Khan in the narrow pass of Nesari near Garh-

Hinglaj, one mile north of Ghataprabha river on 5 March, 1674. He was overwhelmed by an immensely superior enemy force and cut to pieces. Anand Rao, the fallen general's lieutenant, hastened to avenge Pratap Rao's death and plundered Sampgaon, the principal seat of Bahlol's jagir, and carried away a huge booty estimated at one and a half lakhs of *hun*. But Bahlol Khan remained at large. Shivaji appointed Hansaji Mohite as his commander-in-chief in place of the deceased Pratap Rao Gujar.

Shivaji's Coronation, 1674.

Although Shivaji had carved out an extensive kingdom for himself and ruled over it as an independent sovereign, yet he was looked upon by the sultan of Bijapur as a rebel, by the Mughul emperor as a successful usurper and by many important hereditary Maratha families as an upstart whose grandfather had originally been an humble tiller of the soil. He and his ministers, therefore, felt that it was necessary that he should assume the title of king in a formal coronation so as to convince the contemporary Indian powers of his right to deal with them on terms of equality, to give legal validity to his orders or treaties, to win loyalty of his subjects, and to rectify his position in the eyes of those Maratha families which had once been his equals or superiors in social status. Moreover, the leaders of thought in Maharashtra, who wanted the Hindu Swaraj, were anxious to have its fulfilment in a Hindu Chhatrapati. Hence, it was decided by Shivaji to undergo a formal coronation ceremony on a grand scale.

There was, however, one initial difficulty. Shivaji was not a Kshatriya and therefore according to ancient Hindu usage not entitled to coronation. Orthodox Brahmans in Maharashtra were averse to recognising him as a Kshatriya. Hence, Shivaji approached Vishweshwar *alias* Gaga Bhatta, the most learned and renowned Pandit of Banaras to conduct the proposed coronation ceremony. Gaga Bhatta, a master of the four Vedas, the six systems of Hindu philosophy and the entire Hindu scriptures and celebrated "as the Brahma-deva and Vyas of the modern age" acceded to the request, accepted Shivaji as a Kshatriya, and agreed to travel to Raigrah and perform the ceremony. Preparations now began to be made and a large number of learned Brahmans were employed to find out from the Shastras the details about the ceremony. Scholars were sent to Udaipur and Amber to learn the details of the existing practice followed

at the coronation of the Kshatriya rulers of those states. Invitations were sent to learned Brahmans of all parts of India and many came un-invited. 11,000 Brahmans with their wives and children numbering in all 50,000 came to Raigarh and were entertained with sweets for four months. Ambassadors and envoys from most of the Indian powers and from the English and other European trading communities and visitors of various other descriptions including Brahmans and their families numbered nearly one lakh of men, women and children. Gaga Bhatta arrived and was received by Shivaji personally several miles in advance.

The ceremony began about the middle of May 1674 with Shivaji's visit to famous temples in Maharashtra. He visited Paras Ram temple at Chiplun, and Bhawani temple at Pratapgarh, and several other shrines to each of which valuable presents were made. On 7th June he performed penance for his failure to observe the Kshatriya rites so long and was invested with the sacred thread by Gaga Bhatta himself. On 8th June he was re-married with his two surviving wives according to Kshatriya rites. At his initiation into the rites of the twice-born (*dwij*) Kshatriya, Shivaji's guru and other Brahmans uttered Vedic mantras, but the king was not allowed to utter or repeat them owing to Brahmnical insistence that in the modern age there was no other twice-born caste except the Brahman. Next day Shivaji performed his *tuladan* in atoning for the sins committed in his own life and weighed himself seven times again each of the seven metals,—gold, silver, copper, zinc, tin, lead and iron—and fine pieces of cloth and several other things, and these together with one lakh of hun were distributed among the Brahmans. A further sum of 8,000 rupees was paid to them as they wanted Shivaji to atone for the death of Brahmans, cows, women and children during his raids.

The 15th June, 1674, the eve of the coronation ceremony, was spent by the king in self-restraint and mortification of the flesh. On this day Gaga Bhatta was given 5,000 *hun* and other learned Brahmans a hundred gold pieces each. On the day of the coronation (June 16) Shivaji got up early in the morning, worshipped his household gods and "adored the feet of Balam Bhatta, his family priest, Gaga Bhatta and other eminent Brahmans who all received gifts of ornaments and cloth". Next, he took his seat on

a gold-plated stool, clad in pure white robe and decked with ornaments. His queen sat to his left with the hem of her robe knotted with that of Shivaji and the crown prince Shambhuji sat close behind him. The ministers, eight in number, stood at the eight points of the horizon with gold jugs full of water from the sacred rivers and poured it over the heads of the king, the queen and the heir-apparent. This they did to the accompaniment of hymns and music. Next, sixteen Brahman ladies, each with five lamps laid on a gold tray, waved the lights around the king's head according to Hindu custom. This over, Shivaji changed his dress and put on a royal scarlet robe and precious ornaments. He then worshipped his weapons and bowed to his elders and Brahmans and entered the throne room which was richly decorated. He took his seat on the throne amidst the chanting of hymns and music of the band. Sixteen Brahman married women waved lights around the king's head and Brahman scholars chanted *mantras* and blessed Shivaji. Gaga Bhatta held the royal umbrella over the enthroned monarch's head and hailed him as Shiva Chhatrapati. Salvos of guns were fired at the exact time from all the forts in his kingdom. Shivaji then gave away large sums of money to the Brahmans, other people and beggars.

After the ceremony was over Shivaji passed orders and received visitors. He accepted their presents and conferred upon them royal honours. Then he mounted his best horse, descended down the fort and taking his seat on an elephant rode through the streets of the capital in full military procession with his ministers and generals. The procession was preceded by his royal flags borne aloft on two elephants.

Shivaji was obliged to undergo a second coronation ceremony on 4th October, 1674, on the suggestion of a well-known Tantrik priest, named Nishchal Puri Goswami, who said that Gaga Bhatta had performed the ceremony at an inauspicious hour and neglected to propitiate the spirits adored in the Tantra. That was why, he said, the queen mother Jija Bai had died within twelve days of the ceremony and similar other mishaps had occurred. A practical man that he was, Shivaji agreed to perform his coronation again on 4th October, according to Tantrik rites and propitiated Nishchal Puri and his friends with rich gifts. The two coronations cost about 50 lakhs of rupees.

Renewal of war with the Mughuls.

Shivaji's treasure had practically been exhausted by his coronation and he stood in need of money. So, in July he sent an army to lure the Mughul general Bahadur Khan from his headquarters at Pedgaon. Then another force was sent to fall on his camp. The stratagem succeeded and the Marathas acquired a booty of one crore in cash besides two hundred fine horses. Thus Shivaji found means to pay his troops.

There was no peace with Bijapur. Hence, the Maratha troops were sent during the rainy season to raid the Bijapur territory on the side of the Koli country. The Maratha concentration in the vicinity of Surat filled that port with alarm, but the danger passed away when the Maratha army withdrew to join Shivaji near Aurangabad. Next, he descended into Baglan and Khandesh and plundered many towns and defeated the Mughul officer, Qutab-ud-din Khan Kheshgi. Early in February 1675 the Marathas invaded Kolhapur and the town had to save itself by paying a ransom of 1,500 *hun*.

Shivaji now opened negotiations for a peace with Bahadur Khan (March-May 1675), but this produced no result. As Shivaji had only wanted to befool the Khan and not to conclude any treaty, the outwitted Bahadur Khan now entered into an alliance with Bijapur for a joint attack on Shivaji. Aurangzeb heartily approved of the measure and even offered to remit one year's tribute from Bijapur, but the proposed joint action did not materialise on account of the dissensions at the Bijapur court and the fall of its wazir Khawas Khan. Shivaji, however, continued his aggressive activity and captured Kolhapur. Another division of his army raided the territories of Bijapur and Golkunda as far as the town of Hyderabad and brought a good deal of booty. Some of the Maratha troops plundered Veroda and other places in the Portuguese territory. During this time Bahadur Khan was not idle. He attacked Kalyan early in 1676 but failed in spite of Shivaji's serious illness. On recovery Shivaji took steps to come to terms with Bijapur. As Bahadur Khan had invaded that state, Bijapur was in a friendly mood and promised to pay Shivaji a contribution of three lakhs of rupees and an annual sum of one lakh of *hun* as subsidy for protection against the Mughuls, besides confirming the Maratha king in the possession of his country east of the river Krishna including the Kolhapur district. But the alliance between Shivaji and Bijapur

did not last long as the latter state was in the process of decay and could not hold fast to a definite policy.

Shivaji invades Karnatak, 1677-78.

In January 1677, Shivaji embarked on the grandest expedition of his life, the invasion of Eastern Karnatak, as his path in the north being blocked by the Mughuls, he could conveniently expand his territory in the south. The Karnatak plain or Madras coast was very wealthy and reputed for its buried treasure. It had practically been parcelled by the sultans of Golkunda and Bijapur, the former possessing the Kadapa and North Arcot districts upto the Palar river and the entire country bordering the sea from Chicacole to Sadras, while the latter ruled over the Karnool district, the whole of the Mysore plateau north of Banglore and the country from Vellore near Tanjore. Shivaji felt that he could easily make himself master of Karnatak and absorb that flourishing country with its rich towns of Vellore, Jinji and Tanjore. A pretext for the expedition was easily found. In March 1675 Shivaji's step-brother Vyankoji had siezed Tanjore which was then a vassal principality of Bijapur. Vyankoji was jealous of Shivaji's achievements and did not like to merge his individuality. He quarrelled with his powerful minister Raghunath Pant Hanumante and dismissed him. Raghunath Pant visited Madanna, the famous Hindu prime-minister of Golkunda and arranged a joint invasion of Karnatak by Shivaji and the sultan of Golkunda. Shivaji, therefore, prepared for the expedition and gave out that he was going to demand his share of his father's property from his step-brother.

Before starting on the expedition Shivaji wisely secured his flank and rear by inducing Bahadur Khan, the Mughul governor of the Dakhin, to make a peace. He also won over Netaji Palkar who had been forced to become Muslim by Aurangzeb and served that emperor for ten years as Muhammad Quli. The Maratha King reconverted him to Hinduism in June 1676. When preparations were complete Shivaji left Raigarh in January 1677, proceeded to Hyderabad and was welcomed by its prime-minister Madanna several miles in advance and taken into the town in a grand procession. The sultan came forward, embraced Shivaji and seated him by his side on the royal *masnad*. A pact was now entered into for a joint invasion of the southern regions of the east coast. Its terms were—

(*a*) The sultan would pay four lakhs and a half of rupees per month for the expenses of the Maratha army.

(*b*) He would place 5,000 troops under Mirza Muhammad Amin to join the expedition.

(*c*) The conquered territory would be equallly divided between the two parties.

(*d*) The parties would jointly resist the Mughul advance against either of them.

(*e*) Shivaji would sent an agent to reside permanently at Hyderabad, and

(*f*) Shivaji agreed to pay an annual tribute of one lakh of hun to the sultan.

At the end of March Shivaji left Hyderabad to seize Bijapuri Karnatak where his army had already preceded him. He visited several famous shrines on the way and collected *chauth* from Karnool. A contingent of 5,000 troops was despatched to capture the fort of Jinji which belonged to Bijapur. Its commandant Nisar Muhammad Khan delivered the fort to Shivaji on receiving a jagir of an annual income of 50,000 of rupees. Shivaji visited the fort and made it the principal seat of his government in Karnatak and reformed its fiscal administration. Next he besieged Vellore. As the fort of Vellore was not likely to surrender without a long siege, Shivaji left its conquest in the hands of his men and himself proceeded to the south against Sher Khan Lodi who was the master of that part of Karnatak and had secured the support of the French of Pondichery. Sher Khan was defeated and compelled to submit. He interviewed Shivaji on 15th July, 1677, paid him 20,000 *hun* as war indemnity, delivered the whole of his territory and left his son as hostage for the balance of his ransom. He discharged the ransom in February 1678 whereupon his son was allowed to go and join him. At the end of July of that year Vellore, which was besieged by Shivaji's men, also surrendered and the Nayak of Madura agreed to pay a tribute of six lakhs of *hun*. The entire coastal territory of Karnatak from the Tungabhadra to the Kaveri thus passed into Shivaji's possession. The Maratha king quickly organised a regular system of civil and military administration and

established garrisons in the newly conquered country. He returned home crowned with laurels of success.

Settlement with Vyankoji.

At this time Vyankoji, Shivaji's half-brother, who held Mysore and Eastern Karnatak, paid him a visit and the two brothers spent a week together (July 1678). But Vyankoji became suspicious and fled to Tanjore. At the instigation of Vyankoji's ex-minister Raghunath Pant Hanumante, Shivaji who was most probably not anxious to claim a share of his paternal property, demanded that Vyankoji should deliver half of the country that he had inherited from Shahji. Vyankoji evading, replied that being a loyal vassal of the sultan of Bijapur, he would be guided by the latter's orders. The result was an open friction and Vyankoji sought the support of the chiefs of Madura and Mysore. He even begged for the help of Bijapur, but failed to receive any as that kingdom was in the process of dissolution and therefore unwilling to pick a quarrel with Shivaji. Shivaji had no choice but to seize Vyankoji's territory to the north of the Kaveri, including the district of Arni, Kolar, Hoskote, Bangalore, Balapur and Shira and to place it in charge of a governor. On Shivaji's return to Maharashtra, Vyankoji attacked his governor Hambir Rao Mohite, but was defeated. Shivaji wrote a letter of reprimand and warned him against playing into the hands of the Muslims of Bijapur. Eventually a friendly settlement was concluded between the brothers through the good offices of Raghunath Pant, the Maratha king restoring to Vyankoji practically all the territory he had seized from him on the condition of accepting his vassalage and renouncing his allegiance to the sultan of Bijapur. Raghunath Pant was rewarded by the grant of a hereditary *jagir* worth one lakh of *hun*. Although Vyankoji keenly felt the loss of his independence, he ruled over the principality of Tanjore with moderation and success.

During Shivaji's engagement in the Karnatak the Mughul commander Bahadur Khan invaded Bijapur, but was defeated and compelled to withdraw. Aurangzeb censured and removed him, and entrusted the Dakhin supreme command to Diler Khan in August 1677. Diler Khan invaded Golkunda in order to punish the sultan for his alliance with Shivaji. On receipt of this news, Shivaji fearing a Mughul attack on his kingdom returned from Karnatak leaving his men to complete his work in that region. The Maratha king

established strong lines of defensive posts from Panhala to Tanjore. On the way he met with some opposition from Savitri Bai, the Desain of Belvadi, a small village south-east of Belgaon and captured that place.

During Shivaji's absence in Karnatak, Annaji Datto and Moro Pant Pingle extended the Maratha kingdom along the west coast southwards and northwards. They plundered Baroach.

Shivaji and the Sidis of Janjira.

Shivaji's cherished ambition was to extend the western frontier of his kingdom to the sea and to have a strong navy for protection as well as for trade with foreign lands. His connection with Konkan that stretched from Thana to Ratnagiri on the western coast south of Bombay began early in his career, and in 1675 he seized the naval bases of Ponda and Karwar, south of Goa, from the kingdom of Bijapur, and also annexed the neighbouring state of Sondha. The west coast from Kolaba to Malwan with fortified bases at Kolaba, Suvarnadurg, Vijaydurg and Sindudurg was already in his possession. He now constituted the coastal region under him into two governorships, the territory from Rajpuri to Malwan under one officer, and that from Malwan to Dharwar under the other. But Chaul and Janjira which lay in between continued to remain in foreign hands. Goa too could not be taken from the Portuguese.

The rocky island of Janjira, 45 miles south of Bombay, which guarded the mouth of the Rajpuri creek, was held by an Abyssinian family, known as the Sidis, first under the sultan of Ahmadnagar and after the partition of that kingdom in 1636 under that of Bijapur. The Sidis who also possessed most of the modern district of Kolaba with its headquarters at the town of Danda-Rajpuri and maintained a powerful fleet, came into conflict with Shivaji after the latter had conquered most of Konkan. Such a clash was inevitable, for no ruler of Konkan could be safe without having in his possession the west coast-line including the island of Janjira, while mastery over the neighbouring main land was a matter of life and death to the Sidis who drew their supplies and income from it. The Sidis were strong on the sea, while Shivaji was invincible on land. He defeated the Sidis and captured Danda-Rajpuri. As he realised the importance of Janjira, he made preparations to invade it and built a powerful navy which at

its best consisted of seven hundred vessels of various sizes of which nearly four hundred were fighting ships, divided into two squadrons each under an admiral (dariya sarang). In 1669 Shivaji's attack on Janjira pressed the Sidis hard and their leader Fateh Khan was so dis-spirited as to decide to make peace with the Maratha king, deliver Janjira to him and accept a jagir from him on the main land. But he was opposed by his colleagues who transferred their allegiance to the Mughul emperor in 1671. Aurangzeb appointed Sidi Sambal admiral and gave a jagir of the annual revenue of three lakhs of rupees. He put Sidi Qasim in charge of Janjira. The latter succeeded in recovering the fort of Danda by a surprise attack in February 1671 and some other forts in the Kolaba district. Shivaji made several attempts to recapture Danda, but failed. Nor could he conquer Janjira, though by 1675 he had brought under his effective control the whole coast of South Konkan, and fighting between the Sidis and the Marathas continued throughout the remaining years of his reign and that his son Shambhuji.

Shambhuji's desertion.

Shivaji's eldest son Shambhuji, though carefully brought up and trained to be a good soldier, became addicted to sensual pleasures. When parental admonition failed to reclaim the prince, Shivaji had him arrested in 1676 and kept him under surveillance at Sringarpur. He was given sound advice and brought into contact with the great religious teacher Ram Das. But all this proved to be of no avail. So in 1678 Shivaji confined him at Panhala. Here the prince was visited by the Mughul general Diler Khan's spies who successfully induced him by a tempting offer to join the Mughuls. During the night of 23rd December, 1678 Shambhuji with his wife Yesu Bai escaped from Panhala and proceeded towards the Mughul camp at Bahadurgarh. Diler Khan was greatly elated and received Shambhuji on the way at Karkam. Though happy, Aurangzeb thought that Shambhuji's desertion might be a ruse on the part of Shivaji and therefore advised Diler Khan to be on his guard. After joining Diler Khan, Shambhuji and the Mughul general planned an invasion of Bijapur and attacked Bhupalgarh where Shambhuji revealed a large amount of treasure which was kept in the charge of Phirangoji Narsala. Diler Khan captured Bhupalgarh on 12th April, 1679 and killed many of the inmates. Then the two proceeded against Bijapur, the regent of which Sidi Masud appealed to Shivaji for help.

Shivaji responded and attacked the Mughuls who had by this time besieged Bijapur. He assisted the Bijapuris with supplies and materials of war which compelled Diler Khan to raise the siege (November 24) and move towards Panhala in order to capture that fort. But as Diler Khan committed frightful atrocities on the people on the way and especially at Tikota where he harassed the Hindus, Shambhuji who was approached by the inhabitants for protection interceded with Diler Khan; but the latter gave him a rebuff by saying, "I am my own master: you have no business to teach me lessons in good conduct." The prince felt helpless and as he had received the information about Aurangzeb's instructions to Diler Khan to put him under arrest and send him a prisoner to Delhi, he was alarmed for his personal safety. So during the night of 30th November, 1679, he and his wife disguised themselves and left Diler Khan's camp at Athni with ten followers. He fled to Bijapur and took shelter with Masud Khan. Diler Khan sent his agents to Masud Khan requesting him to deliver the prince back to him and offered a heavy bribe. Shambhuji was, therefore, obliged to leave Bijapur and to flee to Panhala. Shivaji was glad to hear of the prince's return after one year, and visited Panhala and spent about a month in his company. He tried to reclaim the prince by good advice and by trying to appeal to his sense of duty and responsibility. But Shambhuji expressed no regret for his past conduct and failed to improve his ways. Nevertheless, Shivaji did not take any step against him and treated him with kindness and affection. But when he noticed no change in the prince's conduct, he confined him at Panhala, and himself left for Sajjangarh to seek solace in the company of saint Ram Das.

Death of Shivaji, April 1680.

Shivaji's last days were clouded with anxiety. Shambhuji's desertion came like a blow and he felt distressed about the future of his great kingdom. The heir-apparent had proved vicious and the king's second son Raja Ram was just a boy of ten. His chief queen Soyra Bai wanted the suppression of Shambhuji and the recognition of her son Raja Ram as heir. The two Maratha ministers Moro Pant Pingle and Annaji Datto were at logger-heads. In view of these circumstances, Shivaji entertained grave doubts about the future of the Maratha state. He discussed the matter with Guru Ram Das but found no solution. He then left for Raigarh on 14th

February, 1680 and celebrated Raja Ram's sacred thread ceremony and marriage. He fell ill on 2nd April and died on 13th April, 1680.

The extent of his kingdom.

Shivaji's kingdom at his death comprised all the country (except the Portuguese possessions) from Ramnagar (modern Dharampur) in the north to Karwar in the south. In the east it included Baglan, half of the Nasik and the Poona districts, the Whole of Satara and much of Kolhapur district. These territories formed his '*Swaraj*'. In addition to the above, he had conquered the Western Karnatak extending from Belgaon to the bank of the river Tungabhadra opposite the Bellary district. All this territory was divided into three provinces, each under a governor. Besides the above, Shivaji had conquered and annexed the country extending from the Tungabhadra opposite Kopal to Vellore and Jinji. This included the northern, central and eastern parts of the modern state of Mysore, and parts of the districts of Bellary, Chittur and Arcot in Madras. In addition to these, he had imperfectly conquered the Kanara region which included the principalities of Sunda and Bednur and southern part of Dharwar.

Outside the above regions, a large area in the Dakhin was under his sphere of influence, though it did not recognise his sovereignty. This area consisted of a large part of the Mughul Dakhin from where Shivaji levied *chauth* or one-fourth of the standard assessment of the land revenue.

Shivaji's kingdom contained two hundred and forty forts and yielded a revenue of seven crores of rupees, but the actual collections were much less, probably one crore only.

Administration.

As was the practice in medieval times, Shivaji was a despot with all powers concentrated in his hands. But as he stood for the welfare of his subjects he might be called a benevolent despot. He had eight ministers to assist him in the work of administration. The ministers, however, did not form a cabinet in the modern sense of the term, for they were responsible to Shivaji alone, who appointed and dismissed them at will. But he left much work in their hands and except in matters of formulation of policy, he seldom interfered

with their work. Nevertheless, the function of the ministers was purely advisory. Among the ministers the Peshwa enjoyed a higher status and royal confidence, but not supremacy over his colleagues.

The ministers, called the Asht Pradhans, were:—

(1) The Prime Minister or Peshwa was officially known as Mukhya Pradhan. He was responsible for the general administration and welfare of the kingdom, and, therefore, his main duties were to control other officers and promote harmony in the administration. He represented the king in his absence and put his seal below the king's to all royal letters and despatches.

(2) The Auditor or Majumdar or Amatya. His duty was to check all the accounts of income and expenditure and to countersign all statements of accounts, whether of the kingdom as a whole or of the particular districts.

(3) The Chronicler or Waqia-Nawis or Mantri. He was in charge of compiling a daily record of the king's activities and to watch over his invitation lists, meals etc., so as to guard against plots.

(4) The Superintendent or Shuru-Nawis or Sachiv. His duty was to see that all royal letters and despatches were drafted in the proper style. He had to revise the letters and despatches. One of his duties was to check the accounts of the parganas.

(5) The Foreign Secretary or Dabir or Sumant. His duty was to advise the king on matters relating to foreign states and on questions of war and peace. He had also to receive foreign ambassadors and envoys and to keep in touch with the activities of other powers.

(6) The Commander-in-Chief or Sar-i-Naubat or Senapati. He was in charge of the recruitment, organisation and discipline of the army. He had also to arrange for the disposition of the troops on the fields of battle.

(7) The Ecclesiastical Head or Sadr and Muhatasib or Pandit Rao or Dana-Dhyaksha. His main duties were to fix dates for religious ceremonies, to punish heresy and to disburse among the Brahmans large sums of money set apart by the king for charity.

He was the judge of canon law, royal Almanac and Censor of Public Morals.

(8) The Chief Justice or Nyayadhish. He was the highest judge in the kingdom and responsible for civil and military justice and for endorsing judicial decisions regarding rights of lands, village headship, etc.

All the ministers except the Ecclesiastical Head and the Chief Justice were required to command armies and lead expeditions. "All royal letters, charters and treaties had to bear the seals of the king and the Peshwa and the endorsement of the next four ministers, *i.e.*, other than the Commander-in-chief, the Ecclesiastical Head and the Chief Justice."

Local Government.

Shivaji's kingdom was divided into four provinces, each under a viceroy. The northern province included Dang, Baglan, the Koli country south of Surat, Konkan north of Bombay and the Dakhin plateau (Desh) southwards to Poona. It was under Moro Trimbak Pingle. The next province or the southern division consisted of Konkan south of Bombay, the Sawant-Vadi and the North Kanara coast. It was governed by Annaji Datto. The third was the south-eastern division and comprised the districts of Satara and Kolhapur of the Dakhin plateau, the districts of Belgaon and Dharwar to Kopal west of the Tungabhadra in Karnatak. It was under Dattaji Pant. The fourth province consisted of the recently conquered country extending from the Tungabhadra opposite Kopal to Vellore and Jinji, *i.e.*, the northern, central and eastern parts of the modern state of Mysore and portions of the Madras districts of Bellary, Chittur and Arcot. This may be called a non-regulated province, as being a recent conquest, it was held by an army of occupation.

Besides these provinces, Shivaji had almost conquered the Kanara highlands including the south Dharwar district and the states of Sunda and Bednur. This region was not actually in Shivaji's possession at the time of his death but was under his suzerainty and paid him tribute.

The provinces were sub-divided into parganas each of which must have had a Collector with a contingent of troops under his

command. But we have no knowledge of the administrative details of these sub-divisions.

Army.

Shivaji's army was a well-organised and disciplined force and at the time of his death consisted of 45,000 *paga* and 60,000 *silahdar* cavalry, and one lakh of Mavle infantry. He left 32,000 horses in his stables, in addition to 5,000 which were given to the Bargirs. The number of his elephants are variously given as 1260, 125 and 300. The last figure seems to be more likely.

The most important part of the army was the famous *paga* or State cavalry. Twenty-five troopers (Bargirs) formed a unit which was placed under one *havaldar*. There was one *jumladar* over every five *havaldars*, and *one-hazari* over every ten *jumladars*, *i.e.*, 1,250 men. The highest rank in the *paga* was *five-hazari* and at the head of the entire *paga* cavalry was a supreme commander or *sar-i-naubat* of cavalry. One water-carrier and one farrier were supplied for each unit, *i.e.*, 25 troopers.

There was another kind of cavalry called *Silahdars* or troopers who supplied their own horses and arms. These ranked lower than the *paga* horsemen, but were under the same *sar-i-naubat* of cavalry.

The infantry was the next important branch of the army. In this nine soldiers or privates (paiks) formed a unit and were placed under one corporal, called *nayak*. Over every five *nayak* there was one *havaldar*, over every two or three *havaldars* one *jumladar* and over ten *jumladars* one *hazari*. Still higher rank was the *seven-hazari*. Over *seven-hazaris* there was the *sar-i-naubat* of infantry. "Shivaji's Guard Brigade of 20,000 select Mavle infantry was splendidly equipped, dressed and armed at great expense of the state."

It was Shivaji's practice to employ his army for eight months to invade foreign dominions and bring supplies. The army spent four months of rains in cantonment and was sent out after Dasehra to invade the country selected by the king. At the time of departure a list was made of all the articles in the possession of all the soldiers and officers. And when they returned they were searched and whatever was found in excess was taken by the state.

Shivaji's army was highly mobile and disciplined, and carried little baggage. No women were permitted to accompany the troops. Even the king had as little of baggage as possible. On account of its organisation, rigorous discipline and extreme simplicity Shivaji's army was irresistible in the seventeenth century.

Revenue administration.

The Maratha revenue settlement under Shivaji was based on measurement of land by a fixed system of mensuration. The area of each village was ascertained in detail and an estimate was made of the expected produce of each *bigha* of land. Of the produce two-fifths were taken by the state and the remaining left to the cultivators. New cultivators were given seed and cattle the value of which was recovered by the government in a number of instalments. The revenue was accepted in cash or in kind and was realised directly by the government officers.

Shivaji's revenue policy was ryotwari, and he was against the revenue farmers and zamindars. He did not permit the zamindars, deshmukhs and desais to exercise political authority over the peasantry. As far as possible Shivaji was against the grant of jagirs in *lieu* of salary to his officers. But whenever he gave assignments of land, he saw that the assignees had no political power in their jagirs.

We have no means of ascertaining the names and rates of other taxes besides the land revenue. But there must have been import and export duties and excise taxes.

An important source of Shivaji's income was *chauth* or one-fourth of the standard revenue of the country which belonged to the neighbouring states and were raided by Shivaji to lay them under contribution. He used to realise the *chauth* every year. Another important source of income was *sardesh-mukhi* or one-tenth of the standard revenue from these states.

Religious policy.

Though an orthodox Hindu, Shivaji was respectful and tolerant to all religions. He gave full freedom of conscience and worship to Muslims and respected their saints and holy places. If he made endowments for Hindu temples, he gave grants to Muslim

saints' hermitages. He built a hermitage for Baba Yaqut of Keloshi. He invariably respected the Quran, and whenever in his raids copies of that book fell into the hands of his men, they were delivered to his Muslim followers to read. He respected Muslim women and never allowed his troops to dishonour them. The historian Khafi Khan who was by no means friendly to Shivaji, praised him for his tolerance to Muslim religion and for the honourable treatment he meted out to Muslim women and children who fell into the hands of his army during the course of his raids. He made no discrimination against Muslims in the state services, in the army and navy, and employed them even in confidential capacity.

Shivaji was a devout Hindu and he took steps to encourage Vedic scholarship. He set apart a large sum of money for the encouragement of learned Brahmans. His guru was the famous saint Ram Das from whom Shivaji derived religious inspiration, but the saint had no influence on Shivaji's state policy or administration. It is said that seeing that Ram Das went out every day to beg alms, Shivaji made a gift of all his kingdom to him. The guru accepted the gift, but returned the kingdom to Shivaji to rule over it as vicar, advising him to hold himself responsible for all his acts to a higher authority. Shivaji agreed and adopted the red-ochre colour of Ram Das' robe for his royal flag (Bhagwa Jhanda) "in order to signify that he fought and ruled in the livery of his ascetic Lord Paramount and conducted himself as ever in his great Task-Master's eyes".

Character of Shivaji.

Shivaji was a dutiful son, attentive husband, a loving father and a kind friend. He adored his mother, respected his father and loved his wives and children. He was a friend of the poor and down-trodden. Though not educated in the formal sense, he was highly learned and well-informed. He was gifted with extraordinary intelligence, supreme commonsense and the power of critical discrimination. He was intensely religious, abstemious and free from vice. Though an orthodox Hindu he was not a religious bigot like his contemporary Aurangzeb, and saw truth in every religion, and adored saints, both Hindu and Muslim.

He was a great military genius who instinctively adopted the guerrilla system of warfare which was well "suited to the racial character

of his soldiers, the nature of the country, the weapons of the age and the internal condition of his enemies." His army was so well recruited, organised, trained and disciplined that it had become irresistible in the 17th century. A great organiser that he was, Shivaji had everything provided beforehand during a campaign. He was an idol of his soldiery with whom he shared the toils and fatigue of a battle. He was the first Indian ruler in the medieval age to perceive the necessity of building up of a navy. He built dockyards and ships for trade as well as for protection.

As a ruler and administrator Shivaji achieved conspicuous success. He created a powerful state, gave it a good system of administration and did everything possible in that age to advance the moral and material interests of his subjects. He kept a firm control over his officers, civil and military, and personally looked after the minute details of his administration, though he was wise enough to delegate much of routine business to his subordinates and to give them plenty of discretion in matters connected with their daily duties. A remarkable thing about him as an administrator was that he had so organised his government, local as well central, that it could continue functioning efficiently in his absence. This was a novel thing, as the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar remarks, in an oriental monarchy. As a ruler Shivaji gave his subjects not only peace and universal toleration but also equal opportunities for all without distinction of caste or creed, and opened government service to talent. His system of administration was beneficient and free from corruption and partisanship. The establishment of Marathi in preference to Persian as the court language and the compilation at his instance of the Sanskrit dictionary Raj-Vyavahar Kosh made it possible for the Marathas to develop their national language. Thus as a ruler Shivaji not only placed before himself a high political ideal but also successfully endeavoured to realise it for common good.

Shivaji was a statesman of a high order, one who could instinctively perceive the possibilities of his time and gather the best elements in the country around him for the fulfilment of his life's ambition, —the establishment of a Hindu '*Swaraj*' in Maharashtra. He called the Marathas to a new life and welded them into a nation. When he began his task, the Mughul empire was at the height of its glory

and he had other powerful enemies, like the sultans of Bijapur and Golkunda, the Sidis of Janjira and the Portuguese of the west coast to face. And yet he succeeded in the teeth of the greatest opposition from these powers. His greatest contribution, therefore, as a statesman was the life he breathed into the Maratha race. He was a great constructive genius and a true 'hero' as king, who proved to be a source of inspiration to the posterity as well as to his contemporaries. "He taught the modern Hindus," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "to rise to the full stature of their growth. Shivaji had shown that the tree of Hinduism is not really dead, that it can rise from beneath the seemingly crushing load of centuries of political bondage, that it can put forth new leaves and branches. It can again lift up its head to the skies."

Did Shivaji want to establish a Hindu empire for the whole of India ?

The historian Sardesai is of the opinion that Shivaji did not restrict his vision to Maharashtra, but wanted to secure freedom for the Hindus of the entire sub-continent of India. He gives the following arguments in support of his view: (1) Shivaji's main object was to win religious freedom and not territory. As early as 1645, he wrote to Dadaji Naras Prabhu about his scheme of "Hindavi-Swarajya", meaning thereby his desire to strive for Hindu religious autonomy for the whole of India. Maratha men of thought and action after Shivaji interpreted his ideal and ambition in the above light. (2) " Shivaji's levy of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* was conceived in the spirit of an all-India instrument of expansion." (3) A contemporary Jaipur poet believed that Shivaji aspired to the imperial throne at Delhi and praised Jai Singh for having subdued such an ambitious man as the Maratha king. (4) Shivaji's journey to Agra was undertaken to acquire a first-hand knowledge of Northern India and to see whether it was ready to throw off the Mughul yoke. (5) His defence of his kingdom by means of land and sea forces, his brushing aside the narrow prejudice against sea voyage and his re-admitting into Hindu society of Hindu converts to Islam, show that he had placed before him a high ideal of political and moral regeneration of the entire Hindu community. (6) While engaged in conflict with the sultans of Dakhin and the Mughuls, Shivaji did not fight with Rajput chiefs and attempted to come to an understanding with them.

The above arguments do not seem to have much force in them and are far from convincing. It does not require much argumentation to show that Hindu religious autonomy in the Mughul empire was an utter impossibility, for in practice it would have established an *imperium in imperio* and therefore could not have been conceded by any ruler much less by Aurangzeb. Although it may be conceded that the base of Shivaji's 'Swaraj' was broad enough to embrace ultimately the whole of India, it is doubtful whether he ever entertained any such ambition. He was a realist and not a visionary and we have no concrete evidence to show that he ever entertained any such ambition. It is now established beyond a shadow of doubt that Shivaji spent twenty-five days, all told, in his return journey from Agra to Raigarh and had no time or opportunity to acquaint himself with conditions in Northern India. His journey to Agra was not undertaken with that object in view. Further, it is wrong to say that he did not fight with the Rajputs, unless by this we mean fighting with the Rajput chiefs as principals and not on behalf of the Mughul emperor. There was no occasion for this as far as Shivaji was concerned.

On the other hand, Shivaji did not take steps to rouse the country against the Mughuls and he only protested against the re-imposition of *Jizya*. He maintained no contact with powerful Hindu rebellious elements in Northern India, such as the Jats, the Satnamis and the Sikhs. Although as a clever general he did appeal to the Hindu sentiment of Jaswant Singh and Jai Singh, he had no concrete scheme of an alliance with them or any other Rajput chiefs for the overthrow of the Mughuls. He failed to make use of the services of the enthusiastic Chhatra Sal Bundela, gave him no assistance and only advised him to go back to Bundelkhand and raise the standard of revolt against Aurangzeb. These facts militate against the theory of an all-India Hindu empire.

Causes of Shivaji's failure to build an enduring State.

There were several causes of Shivaji's failure to build an enduring state. In the first place, his reign was very short, just of ten years and he was engaged all-through in fighting with his numerous enemies, and had very little time for consolidation. Secondly, the condition of the Maratha society in the 17th century was such that it could be reformed only by a long patient and sustained effort

of generations of selfless workers. In that age of instability every one clung to his *watan* or hereditary land, and for every plot of land there were more than one claimant due to either the expansion of the family and the division of the *watan* among the members, or the replacement of one owner by another by the local governors or sultans. This had given rise to constant disputes among the people in Maharashtra. After the establishment of his supremacy, Shivaji was obliged to give his decision about disputed *watans* with the result that the disappointed suitors ranged themselves against him and joined his enemies, such as the sultans of Bijapur and Golkunda or the Mughuls. Shivaji had, therefore, not only to fight his enemies, but also his own people throughout his life. Thirdly, in the 17th century, people in Maharashtra as in the rest of India were divided into minute groups or castes with great jealousy towards one another. The Brahmans despised the non-Brahmans and were themselves torn by such divisions among them as Desh-Brahmans and Konkan Brahmans, Chitpavans and Karahdes. They hated one another and meted out an uncharitable treatment even to Shivaji who had proved to be their saviour and did not allow him to utter the Vedic mantras at his coronation. Their implacable prejudice made a common action difficult, and real and permanent national solidarity an impossibility. Fourthly, Shivaji's political success created a reaction in favour of Hindu orthodoxy. The upper classes in Maharashtra on account of the importance given to them in the Maratha state began to emphasise the life of ceremonial purity which was opposed to the simple and homogeneous life of the poor. The result was a gulf between the two main classes of the Maratha society. Thus, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes, "Shivaji's political success sapped the main foundation of that success......In proportion as Shivaji's ideal of a Hindu 'Swaraj' was based on orthodoxy, it contained within itself the seed of its own death." Fifthly, whereas Maharashtra as a whole gained considerably on account of its political independence under Shivaji, no well-thought-out and organised attempt was made to educate the people and to improve their intellect and character. The common folk remained as ignorant as ever and took little interest in the fortune of the race. On account of this basic failure, the Maratha kingdom so laboriously built up by the exertion and genius of Shivaji, fell within ten years of the founder's death.

Shambhuji, 1680-1689.

On Shivaji's death his second son Raja Ram, then ten years old, was crowned at Raigarh by his mother Soyra Bai in April 1680. But Shambhuji who was confined in the fort of Panhala put its commandant to death, obtained possession of the fort, and won over Hambir Rao Mohite, the commander-in-chief, and proceeding to Raigarh, captured it and threw Raja Ram and Soyra Bai into prison. He carried out his accession on 30th July, appointed Nilo Pant, son of Moro Pant Pingle, as Peshwa and rewarded his other followers. The formal ceremony of coronation took place on 20th January, 1681. But on account of his vicious character, he was very unpopular and a plot was hatched against his life. Getting wind of it, he put many notable persons including his step-mother Soyra Bai to death. The result was the alienation of his nobles and officers against whom Shambhuji had to take strict measures. He grew distrustful of his father's faithful servants and therefore appointed Kavi Kalash, a Brahman of Kanauj, who was a good Sanskrit and Hindi scholar and poet, as his adviser, and placed him above the Peshwa. As he was an outsider, Maratha nobles and officers hated him bitterly, dubbed him a spy and gave him the nick-name of *Kalusha*. He was unjustly accused of introducing Shambhuji to a life of vice and of being a cause of his ruin. Owing to these circumstances, Shambhuji's reign proved to be a period of dissensions and disturbances. The Maratha prestige fell. But on account of the momentum given to it by Shivaji's brilliant reign, the administration dragged on.

Shambhuji had hardly established his hold over his kingdom before he received the news of the flight of prince Akbar, fourth son of Aurangzeb to the Dakhin, to take shelter with him and to concert measures in co-operation with him to wrest the throne of Hindustan from his father. The circumstances leading to Akbar's rebellion against Aurangzeb and his journey to Maharashtra have been given in the last chapter and need not be repeated here. On crossing the Narmada, Akbar informed (10th May, 1681) Shambhuji of his resolution to depose Aurangzeb in alliance with the Maratha king and seeking his co-operation in the enterprise. The prince journeyed through Khandesh and Baglan via Nasik and Trimbak into north Konkan and reached Pali near Negothna, twenty-five miles north of Raigarh, on 11th June, 1681. Here arrangements were made for his accommodation and comfort and the Maratha king appointed Netaji

Palkar who had lived in Northern India for ten years and was acquainted with the life at the imperial court, to look after the prince. Shambhuji met him on 23 November, but no alliance was entered into between them. Shambhuji was not quite sure about the prince's bonafides and feared that his visit might not be a ruse on the part of Aurangzeb. Moreover, the Maratha king on account of his character and domestic difficulties could not spare time and money to undertake an expedition against Delhi. Although he did his best to provide comfort to the fugitive prince yet Akbar must have felt extremely uncomfortable in the unpretentious thatched building in which he was lodged at Pali, and the humble fare which was provided by the Maratha king who had little idea of the life of luxury and splendour that the Mughul princes led in Northern India. On account of these circumstances, Akbar's six years' sojourn in Maharashtra proved to be barren. The lofty project of leading an expedition and deposing Aurangzeb remained only a paper scheme.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb pursued his son to the Dakhin and took up his residence at Aurangabad in the vicinity of which he spent nearly twenty-six years of his life. He sowed dissensions among the followers of Shambhuji and Akbar and won many of them over to his side by bribes and rewards. He sent Shahab-ud-din Khan to block Akbar's path to the north by capturing some of the Maratha key-forts near Nasik. The Khan besieged the fort of Ramsej, seven miles north of Nasik, but was compelled to abandon the siege on account of timely arrival of a Maratha army. Akbar now suggested to Shambhuji that the two should make a joint attack upon Aurangzeb's headquarters, or make a dash through Gujarat into Rajputana, but Shambhuji's situation forbade any such bold undertaking. The hesitation of the two princes gave Aurangzeb an opportunity to invade the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and to annex them to the empire. Bijapur fell in 1686 and Golkunda in 1687. Then the emperor concentrated his attention against the Marathas. Akbar was now despaired of help from Shambhuji. So in sheer desperation he embarked on a British cargo vessel at Rajapur in February 1687. He took shelter in Iran.

Shambhuji invades Janjira and Chaul, 1681-83.

While Aurangzeb was proceeding to the Dakhin, Shambhuji undertook an expedition against the Sidis of Janjira and the Portu-

guese of Chaul, who were called upon by Aurangzeb to wage war against the Maratha king. The Sidis had raided the Maratha territory right upto the foot of Raigarh towards the end of 1681. Shambhuji replied by besieging Janjira by land and sea and inflicting terrible losses on the Sidis. But just at this time Aurangzeb arrived in the Dakhin and Shambhuji was obliged to raise the siege of Janjira. In 1683, Shambhuji invaded the Portuguese ports of Chaul and Goa and reduced them to great straits. The Marathas defeated the Portuguese at Phonda and captured its strong-hold. Goa too was on the point of surrendering itself when luckily for the Portuguese, Shambhuji had to raise the siege in order to face a Mughul army under Shah Alam who was threatening his rear (November 1683).

Defeat and capture of Shambhuji, 1689.

From the beginning of 1684, Shambhuji was on the defensive, and Aurangzeb sent his armies to capture the Maratha king. Shahab-ud-din Firoz Jang and his son Chin Qilich Khan, the future Nizam-ul-Mulk, were deputed to conquer north Konkan and Baglan. The result was a deadly struggle between the Mughuls and the Marathas, and the latter devastated the Mughul territory from Aurangabad to Burhanpur. But the tables were turned against the Marathas after Aurangzeb had annexed the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and was free to concentrate his might against Shambhuji. He sent Sarza Khan, who was formerly a general of the Bijapur army to invade the Satara district. In the battle that followed Shambhuji's commander-in-chief Hambir Rao Mohite lost his life. After this, the Mughuls began an encircling movement and Shambhuji being deserted by most of his followers, moved between Panhala and Raigarh for shelter. The Shirkes who were hostile to Shambhuji joined the Mughuls and defeated Kavi Kalash in November 1688, compelling him to flee for shelter to the fort of Vishalgarh. Shambhuji thereupon defeated the Shirkes and joined Kavi Kalash at Vishalgarh. The Shirkes reported the whereabouts of the Maratha king to Aurangzeb's agents. One of the Mughul generals, named Muqarrab Khan, being informed of Shambhuji's whereabouts, surprised the Maratha king while he was encamped at Sangameshwar. After a small skirmish, Shambhuji and Kavi Kalash were captured and taken prisoners to Aurangzeb's camp (February 1689).

The prisoners were taken to Bahadurgarh where the emperor was encamped. The Maratha king and Kavi Kalash were dressed as bafoons in fool's long caps with bells hanging from them, and mounted on camels, were brought to the imperial camp with drums beating and trumpets pealing. As the prisoners drew near, Aurangzeb descended from the throne and knelt down in prayer to the Almighty for his victory. The emperor had a look at the prisoners after which they were lodged in a cell. Next day, he sent a message to Shambhuji offering to spare his life, if the Maratha king (1) surrendered all his forts, (2) revealed his hidden treasures, and (3) disclosed the names of the Mughul officers who were in league with him. Shambhuji disdainfully rejected the offer and as he keenly felt the humiliation heaped on him by Aurangzeb, he abused the emperor and his Prophet and asked for one of Aurangzeb's daughters in marriage as a price of his friendship. Ruhulla Khan who had communicated the emperor's offer to Shambhuji, naturally did not report the details of the Maratha king's reply and only hinted at the foul nature of it. Aurangzeb, who had no faith in magnanimity and forgiveness, ordered Shambhuji and the minister Kavi Kalash to be tortured to death. That very night Shambhuji was blinded. Next day, the tongue of Kavi Kalash was cut out and day after day for a fortnight all manner of torture was applied to them and then the prisoners were removed to Koregaon, where they were put to a cruel and painful death on 21st March, 1689, their limbs being hacked to pieces and thrown to the dogs. Their heads were stuffed with straw and exhibited in the principal cities of the Dakhin to the accompaniment of drums.

Character of Shambhuji.

Thus perished the second Maratha king after a brief reign of a little less than nine years. Shambhuji was a brave soldier, but no good ruler or statesman. He lacked his father's genius for organisation and making use of opportunities. Nor did he possess the qualities of disarming opposition, recognising merit in men and pulling on with colleagues. He quarrelled with his father's ministers and other officers and his wicked conduct roused opposition with the result that he began to suspect those who made his father's reign glorious. He failed to take advantage of the presence of Aurangzeb's son Akbar in the Dakhin and could not undertake a joint attack on Aurangzeb or his capital. He proved to be a sad failure in spite of his bravery and dash; but by the manner of his death and by stoically bearing all the hor-

rible tortures to which he was subjected, Shambhuji atoned for his sins of omission and commission. By his death he achieved what he had failed to do in life. His imprisonment and death united the Marathas and made them determined to fight and overcome the Mughul emperor.

Raja Ram, 1689-1700.

On Shambhuji's capture Raja Ram, the younger son of Shivaji, then ninteen years old, was proclaimed king on 19th February, 1689. He released Prahlad Niraji and other high officers who had been unjustly confined by Shambhuji, and made arrangements for the defence of his capital which was besieged by Zulfiqar Khan. Shambhuji's widow Yesu Bai advised Raja Ram to remove himself to Vishalgarh for safety, while she herself boldly stood the siege at Raigarh. Under this lady's inspiration Prahlad Niraji and Shankarji Malhar started an unprecedented campaign of plunder and fire in the Mughul territory. They sent their spies to every part of the Mughul Dakhin to obtain information of the enemy movement. They tried to prevent reinforcements from reaching Zulfiqar Khan at Raigarh, but the Maratha capital fell through the treachery of one of their own officers. Suryaji Pisal opened the gates to Zulfiqar Khan on 13th November, 1689 on the promise of the grant to him of the deshmukhi watan of Wai which he had coveted for a long time. Yesu Bai and her young son Shahu and many other notable persons were taken prisoners and carried away by Zulfiqar Khan to the Mughul camp. Thereafter, Aurangzeb captured many other forts; but his triumph was short-lived, for now the Maratha war of independence took the turn of a people's war.

The national disaster put the Marathas on their mettle and enabled them to summon all the efforts they were capable of in defence of their home and hearth. Under the leadership of Raja Ram, who though not a great organising genius like his father, many ardent spirits the most important among whom was Prahlad Niraji, reputed to be the wisest man of the time in Maharahstra, toiled hard to roll back the tide of the Mughul invasion. The next important adviser of Raja Ram was Ram Chandra Nilkanath, who by his peculiar genius in recognising merits of men and harnessing them in national defence, kept a vigilant eye from his base at Vishalgarh upon the extensive theatre of war from Burhanpur in the north to Jinji in the south. Under these two men, four lieutenants of exceptional abilities, namely, Paras Ram

Trimbak Pratinidhi, Shankarji Narain Sachive, Shantaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav worked wonders, frustrated Aurangzeb's schemes and secured Maratha independence which had been lost by thecapture of Shambhuji and the fall of their capital Raigarh.

Raja Ram with his family and court fled to Jinji, which very soon became the Maratha capital. From there bands of enthusiastic and adventurous troops were despatched to attack the Mughuls in Maharashtra, to harass them in all possible ways and to prevent them from consolidating their position in the country. Meanwhile, Jinji was besieged by Aurangzeb's men under Zulfiqar Khan. The siege lasted for eight years, but Raja Ram had already escaped to Maharashtra. The struggle continued and Shantaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadhav inflicted unspeakable misery on the imperialists, hovered round Aurangzeb's own camp and plundered it more than once. The result was that Aurangzeb who had gone to besiege and conquer Maharashtra was himself besieged by the Marathas. But the old obstinate emperor persevered on and disdaining the idea of a compromise exerted himself to the utmost, but ultimately met with a miserable failure.

Raja Ram returned to Vishalgarh early in March 1698, eluding the Mughul troops on the route. He established his court at Satara, and although it was lost soon afterwards, the Marathas recovered it in 1704. Raja Ram made a tour of his country and cheered up his officers in the various forts, despatched some troops to ravage Khandesh and Berar, and exact *Chauth* from there. In 1699 he proceeded to Singhgarh, giving out that he was going to plunder Surat. A Mughul army compelled him to turn back. The Maratha spirit by that time had risen high and they were gradually becoming confident of rolling back the tide of the Mughul invasion. But Raja Ram soon after fell ill and as Satara was besieged by the enemy, he had to be carried in a palanquin to Singhgarh where he died on March 12, 1700. He had completed his thirtieth year.

Raja Ram was not possessed of the dash or soldierly talent or initiative of his father. As he was barely ten years of age at the time of Shivaji's death and subsequently kept a prisoner by Shambhuji, he had not been given proper education. Shambhuji's capture and death, however, raised him to the throne. He was fortunate in having two advisers—Ram Chandra Pant and Prahalad Niraji—of exceptional

ability and two brave warriors, Shantaji and Dhanaji, to carry out his plans and policy. That is why Raja Ram's reign could boast of having turned the corner as far as Maratha interests were concerned. It must, however, he admitted that Raja Ram was a weak ruler, addicted to opium and dissipation. His great virtue as a ruler was that he gave his confidence and support to his ministers and rarely interfered with their work. This was the main cause of his success.

Ascendancy of Tara Bai, 1700-1707.

On Raja Ram's death his widowed queen Tara Bai became the *de facto* head of government. She crowned her son Shivaji II, then a child of four, and became his regent. She was a spirited lady who did not waste time or tears on the fall of the new Maratha capital Satara within a month of Raja Ram's death, infused vigour in her people and organised a tough opposition to Aurangzeb. She exhibited wonderful powers of organisation and inspired the Marathas with a sense of devotion to their national cause. Aurangzeb, therefore, directed his forces for the conquest of Panhala and Vishalgarh, the two strong fortresses, which became the seats of the Maratha court. The Marathas constantly hovered round the emperor's camp and carried away every thing that they could. The emperor captured several Maratha forts, but lost them one by one. Under the leadership of Tara Bai, the Maratha power grew stronger and stronger with the result that Aurangzeb was compelled to be on the defensive. The Marathas, during the last year of the aged emperor's reign, proceeded beyond Maharashtra and led distant expeditions into Malwa and Gujarat. They ravaged Burhanpur, Surat, Broach and other rich towns of the western coast. They established their rule over Southern Karnatak. In the midst of these difficulties Aurangzeb died on March 2, 1707.

Tara Bai managed the affairs of Maharashtra in the name of her son with skill and ability, but Ram Chandra Pant, who was in favour of Sahu's restoration, opposed the masterful queen, and therefore fell out of favour at the court. Tara Bai's main supporters were Paras Ram Trimbak, Dhanaji Jadhav and Shankarji Narain with whose assistance, she prosecuted the war with vigour and success. She moved constantly from fort to fort in order to direct operations and encourage her men. The success of the Maratha war of independence was in no small measure due to the indomitable personality of this queen.

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CHAPTER X

LATER MUGHULS

Bahadur Shah, 1707-1712.

Aurangzeb's immediate successor was his over-sixty-three-year old second son Muazzam (Shah Alam), who crowned himself emperor and assumed the title of Bahadur Shah (May 1707) at the bridge of Shah-daula, 24 miles north of Lahore. At Jamrud in Afghanistan he had received the news of his father's death on March 22, and hastened immediately to Delhi to contest for the throne in which he was greatly assisted by his lieutenant, Munim Khan. His second son Azim-us-Shan, then at Kora en-route for the Dakhin, pushed on to Agra, occupied the city and besieged the fort for his father. Bahadur Shah in person arrived at Agra on 12th June and gained possession of the fort with its accumulated treasures supposed to be of the value of 24 crores of rupees. His younger brother Azam Shah who was at a few miles' distance from Ahmadnagar at the time of Aurangzeb's death, ascended the throne on 14th March and after a few days' halt proceeded towards Agra. Had he permitted his able son Bidar Bakht to push on to Agra, the latter would most probably have occupied that fort together with its wealth before the arrival of Azim-us-Shan. But Azam was jealous of his son and devoid of ability and firmness of character. He wasted many precious days, and on his arrival in the vicinity of Agra found Bahadur Shah in possession of that imperial city. He rashly rejected Bahadur Shah's offer to partition the empire and fought with him at Jajau near Samogarh on 18th June, 1707 and was defeated and killed.

Before he could feel secure on the throne of Delhi, Bahadur Shah had to settle his scores with his youngest brother Kam Bakhsh, governor of Bijapur, and a foolish head-strong prince who had crowned himself, on the receipt of the news of his father's death and made preparations to contest for the empire of Hindustan. Bahadur Shah crossed the Narmada on 17th May, 1708 and proposed to him to settle their dispute peacefully. But Kam Bakhsh rejected the offer and fought a

battle near Hyderabad on January 13, 1709 and was badly defeated. He succumbed to his wounds during the night. Bahadur Shah was now the undisputed master of the empire.

After his victory over Azam, Bahadur Shah was obliged to proceed to Rajputana where Ajit Singh of Jodhpur had declared himself independent and was raiding the Mughul territory of Ajmer. The emperor reached Amber in January 1708 and intervening in a dispute for succession settled the Kachhwaha state on Bijai Singh. Next, he proceeded towards Jodhpur and pardoned Ajit Singh who had been defeated at Merta and conferred on him the rank of 3,500 with the title of Maharaja. Then he returned to Ajmer en-route for the Dakhin to fight Kam Bakhsh. While he was proceeding towards Dakhin the Rajputs chiefs, namely, Ajit Singh, Durga Das and Raja Jai Singh Kachhwaha, fled from his camp on 30th April, 1708 and joined Maharana Amar Singh of Mewar. They entered into a formal alliance, pledging a joint resistance to the Mughuls, and expelled the Mughul commandant of Jodhpur. Next, they defeated the *faujdar* of Hindaun and Bayana, and captured Amber which was taken by Raja Jai Singh Kachhwaha. They even attacked Sayyid Husain Khan Barha, the commandant of Mewar, and killed him in September 1708. Bahadur Shah was obliged, therefore, to return to Rajputana in May 1710. But on account of his weakness and a Sikh rising in the Panjab, he decided to make peace with the Rajput chiefs who were pardoned "and sent back to their States with presents" (21st June, 1710).

Like the Rajputs in Marwar, the Sikhs in the Panjab taking advantage of Aurangzeb's death, broke into an open rebellion. On the death of Guru Govind Singh (November 1708) his followers in the Dakhin produced a man who resembled him and sent him to the Panjab declaring that Guru Govind Singh had come back to life for the sake of making the Sikhs independent of Muslims. This man known as Banda appeared suddenly in the country north-west of Delhi, took the title of 'Sacha Padishah' and summoned the Sikhs to join him in a holy war against the Mughuls. He defeated the *faujdar* of Sonipat, sacked the town of Sadhaura, 26 miles east of Ambala, and defeated and killed Wazir Khan, the *faujdar* of Sarhind on 22nd May, 1710. He occupied Sarhind after plundering it for four days and slaughtering its Muslim population and defiling mosques. As the result of his raids he acquired a huge plunder, including 2 crores of rupees in cash, and

his armed followers swelled to over 40,000. Banda made Sarhind his headquarters and from there he made plundering raids on the Mughul territory in the Panjab and the modern Uttar Pradesh. Some of the Sikhs assembled at Amritsar and invaded Lahore, but were defeated. Nevertheless, they dominated the country between Delhi and Lahore and stopped the peaceful traffic between these two cities.

In order to punish the Sikhs, Bahadur Shah after patching up a peace with the Rajputs, left Ajmer on 17th June, 1710, and reached Sadhaura in the first week of December. But Banda had evacuated Sadhaura a few days before Bahadur Shah's arrival there and established his headquarters at Lohgarh, a fort at Mukhlispur, 12 miles north-east of Sadhaura. He acted as a king and issued coins in his own name The emperor besieged Lohgarh but the Sikhs offered a most stubborn resistance and defenced the fort with heroic courage. The imperialists suffered greatly on account of excessive rains, cold and scarcity of supplies. They eventually captured Lohgarh, but Banda escaped before the fall of the fort. The Mughuls acquired many prisoners and a huge booty which included 2 crores of rupees in cash.

The Mughuls re-occupied Sarhind in January 1711, but the Sikhs continued raiding the imperial territory. They descended from the hills and created fresh disturbances in northern Panjab, especially in the Bari and the Rechna Doabs, which were devastated. Banda was defeated and driven into the hills of Jammu near Pasrur by Muhammad Amin Khan and Rustam Khan. But as Bahadur Shah died on 27th February, 1712 no further action could be taken against him (*i.e.* Banda). The guru recovered Sadhaura and Lohgarh and continued his depradations as before.

Bahadur Shah at the time of his death was in his sixty-ninth year. He was buried in the courtyard of Aurangzeb's mosque near the tomb of Qutub-ud-din Kaki, outside Delhi. He was a mild and generous man and although possessed of great dignity of behaviour, he proved to be a weak ruler. He was incapable of saying 'no' to any one and his policy was to allow matters to drift and to postpone decision lest it should displease some one of his court. He was fond of compromise even in important political and administrative matters. He had promised his most faithful and able lieutenant Munim Khan the prime-ministership of the empire; but as Asad Khan, his father's prime-minister, claimed that post, Bahadur Shah tried to please both by

appointing Munim Khan wazir or revenue minister, while allowing Asad Khan to retain the post of prime-minister. Such a division of authority brought about administrative complications and at the same time did not please either of the two nobles. Bahadur Shah was profuse in the grant of titles and rewards and did not keep a tight control over the administration. He was consequently popularly called a needless king (*Shah-be-Khabar*). He followed his father's policy of religious intolerance, retained the *jizya* and did not appoint Hindus to high posts. Fortunately on account of the traditional respect for the crown, the administration went on petty successfully. Bahadur Shah had the good sense of keeping the experienced officers of his father's time in the posts held by them and refraining from interfering with their work. Hence his short reign was on the whole successful.

Jahandar Shah, 1712-1713.

On Bahadur Shah's death three wars of succession took place among his sons, namely, Jahandar Shah, Azim-us-Shan, Rafi-us-Shan and Jahan Shah, all of whom were in Lahore. Zulfiqar Khan, son of the prime-minister Asad Khan, conspired against Azim-us-Shan and secretly brought his three brothers together for a joint action against him. Azim-us-Shan was defeated and killed and his huge wealth and other valuable property fell into the hands of the victors. Next, the three brothers quarrelled among themselves, and with the assistance of Zulfiqar Khan the eldest Jahandar Shah disposed of Rafi-us-Shan and Jahan Shah, both of whom lost their lives in fighting. Jahandar Shah, then about to complete his fifty-first year, crowned himself emperor (29th March, 1712) and appointed Zulfiqar Khan as his prime-minister.

The new emperor reached Delhi on 22nd June, 1712 and threw himself into sensual pleasures to the neglect of all business of government. Although he was 51 years of age at the time of his accession and had sons and grand-sons, he spent his time in the company of a concubine named, Lal Kumari, who was raised above his queens and given an allowance of two crores of rupees a year, besides jewels and clothes. Her relations were given high posts in the imperial service. Jahandar Shah spent his days in buffoonery and nights in drunken frolics and revelry and allowed vulgar people, chiefly the relations of Lal Kumari, to insult high nobles and to mismanage state affairs. The wazir Zulfiqar Khan was thwarted in administrative business by Ali

Murad, the emperor's foster brother entitled Amir-ul-Umra. The entire administration fell into utter confusion during Jahandar Shah's brief reign of ten months.

Jahandar Shah's claim to rule was disputed by Farrukh-Siyar, the second son of Azim-us-Shan. This prince, then aged about thirty, was deputy governor of Bangal on behalf of his father, on whose death he proclaimed himself emperor in April 1712. He managed to secure the assistance of Sayyid Husain Ali Khan, deputy governor of Patna and the latter's elder brother Abdullah Khan, deputy governor of Allahabad. They were known as the Sayyid brothers and later became famous as the king-makers in Indian history. Leaving Patna on 18th October, 1712 at the head of 25,000 men, Farrukh-Siyar advanced to Khajuha where he defeated prince Azz-ud-din who was sent by his father Jahandar Shah to encounter him. Azz-ud-din retreated to Agra, leaving all his treasures and camp to be occupied by Farrukh-Siyar the next morning. His son's defeat obliged Jahandar Shah to march in person to Agra. His government had fallen into utter confusion and bankruptcy and he had to satisfy his troops with money and articles taken out from the imperial store-houses, which had not been touched since the days of Babur. He arrived at Agra on 29th December, 1712 and was badly defeated by Farrukh-Siyar on 10th January, 1713. Accompanied by Lal Kumari, he fled to Delhi in a bullock-cart after shaving his beard and moustaches and disguising himself as a poor villager. After suffering great privations on the way, he entered Delhi by stealth during the night of 15th January and went straight to Asad Khan for protection. The crafty old minister arrested the ex-emperor in order to deliver him to Farrukh-Siyar and save himself and his son Zulfiqar Khan from the latter's vengeance. Jahandar Shah was put to death by Farrukh-Siyar's order on 11th February, 1713, just one day before the new emperor had entered Delhi.

Jahandar Shah was the first ruler of the Mughul dynasty who showed himself utterly incapable of administering the affairs of the empire. Although a fairly active soldier in his early days, he had sunk into sloth and debauchery on reaching manhood. As a king he behaved like a foolish upstart spoiled by the sudden turn of fortune and left all the affairs of government in the hands of mean and vulgar people without education, ability or training. He suffered the just retribution for his unworthy conduct within 10 months of his accession.

Farrukh-Siyar, 1713-1719.

Farrukh-Siyar was a youth of thirty at the time of his accession (11th January, 1713) and extremely handsome. But he was utterly weak, thoughtless and devoid of physical and moral courage. "Like all weak men he was swayed by the latest adviser and having resolved to do a thing could never hold to it long but soon sank into despair and went back on his undertakings. Constitutionally incapable of governing by his own will and controlling others, he would not trust any able agent, but was easily inspired by a childish suspicion of his ministers and induced to enter into plots of their overthrow." His reign was one long attempt at a perfidious conspiracy against his wazir, Sayyid Abdullah Khan and Mir Bakhshi Husain Ali Khan, the two Sayyid brothers who had been instrumental in raising him to the throne. The quarrel between the emperor and his ministers began as early as March 1713, with the result that the wazir declined to attend the court and the spineless emperor had to visit him and patch up a truce. Month after month, Farrukh-Siyar would hatch plots with the assistance of his two favourites, Mir Jumla, the superintendent of the pages and Khwaja Asim entitled Khan Dauran Samsam-ud-daula, the superintendent of the audience hall; but as these two newly raised nobles were mere carpet-knights with no ability or courage to offend the Sayyid brothers, no plot was ever executed. The main consequence of this perpetual plotting was the complete alienation of the ministers from their sovereign and confusion and disorder in the empire.

Immediately after his accession, Farrukh-Siyar had Zulfiqar Khan, the wazir of Jahandar Shah, killed (13th February, 1713) and his father Asad Khan imprisoned and their property confiscated. Among the persons appointed to high offices was Chin Qilich Khan, entitled Nizam-ul-Mulk, who was given the governorship of the six provinces of the Dakhin. He was a leader of the Turàni party. During his reign, an expedition was undertaken against Ajit Singh, ruler of Marwar, who had on the death of Bahadur Shah expelled the imperial officers from Jodhpur, forbidden cow-slaughter and the Muslim call to prayer in his dominion. He had even captured Ajmer. Husain Ali Khan was directed to punish the Rathor king. Ajit Singh submitted and agreed to send his son Abhai Singh to court for service and to give one of his daughters in marriage to the emperor (May 1714). Husain Ali Khan had to return hurriedly, as during his absence the cowardly emperor had formed a plot against Abdullah Khan. The

minister felt harassed and offered to resign. Farrukh-Siyar was frightened and removed his chief adviser Mir Jumla from the court to the governorship of Bihar in order to appease the Sayyid brothers. In return for this Husain Ali Khan accepted the governorship of the Dakhin and in April 1715 proceeded to take charge of it in person.

The next important expedition was against the Sikh guru Banda who had built a large fort near Sadhaura and was ruling over the locality. Abdus Samad Khan, governor of Lahore, besieged the fort, but the Sikhs fought most obstinately. Yet they had to evacuate the fort and take shelter in Lohgarh where the guru himself was residing. Abdus Samad now besieged Lohgarh and Banda was compelled to evacuate it (October 1713), and to flee to the hills from where he led plundering expeditions in the Panjab. In April 1715 Banda was again besieged in Gurdaspur. After a long and obstinate fighting he was obliged to surrender on 17th December, 1715 and was taken prisoner with 740 followers. They were brought to Delhi and put to a cruel death. "The Sikhs showed wonderful patience and strength of mind, and welcomed death as a deliverance; not one of them accepted the offer of Islam to save his life. Banda himself and his little son of three years were brutally hacked to death on 19th June, 1716."

Attempts were also made to put down Churaman Jat, who though won over by Bahadur Shah by the grant of a post in the Mughul service, was now carrying on high-way robbery in the neighbourhood of Agra. Raja Jai Singh of Amber besieged Churaman in his new fort of Thun, but though re-inforced by the imperial troops he failed to capture it and the siege dragged on for 20 months. On account of the mediation of the Sayyid brothers, Churaman was allowed to remain in possession of his fort on condition that he should submit to the emperor. Jai Singh was directed to raise the siege and Churaman visited Delhi in April 1718.

During the interval, Farrukh-Siyar kept on plotting against the Sayyid brothers. For this purpose he wanted to use Nizam-ul-Mulk who had been ousted from the governorship of the Dakhin by Sayyid Husain Ali, but the latter felt disgusted with the emperor's fickleness and left the court after two years. Next, the emperor raised Inayatullah Kashmiri to the rank of 4,000 and to the office of imperial revenue minister, but though he tried to reform administration and reimpose *jizya* on the Hindus, he failed to oust the Sayyid

brothers. Then Farrukh-Siyar commissioned Muhammad Murad, another Kashmiri noble, whom he raised to the rank of 7,000 to bring about the overthrow of the Sayyids, but he too failed. Sarbuland Khan was next invited and promoted to the rank of 7,000, but he too drew back from the conspiracy. After this the emperor formed a plot to surround Abdulla Khan at the Id prayer and slay him, but the plot had to be given up. By this time even the emperor's friends like Mir Jumla and Samsam-ud-daulah had gone over to the side of the Sayyids. Yet the foolish Farrukh-Siyar would not cry a halt to his cowardly proceedings and kept on harassing wazir Abdulla Khan who was obliged to write to his brother Husain Ali Khan, then in the Dakhin, to return to the capital. Husain Ali Khan secured the assistance of the Marathas by promising to Shahu the *chauth* or one-fourth of the revenue of the Dakhin, the *sardeshmukhi* or ten percent of the collections, the confirmation of Shivaji's hereditary dominions and the release of Shahu's mother and half-brother who were kept prisoners in Delhi. He further agreed to pay the salary of the Marathas and was joined by about 11,000 of them under the command of Peshwa Balaji Vishwanath. Leaving Burhanpur on 14th December, 1718 the Mir Bakhshi arrived at Delhi on 16th February, 1719, pretending that he was escorting an alleged son of Akbar, the fourth son of Aurangzeb. Although Farrukh-Siyar had, in the meanwhile, apologised to Sayyid Abdulla Khan, lavished favours on him and his brother and conciliated other nobles of their party, it was decided to depose him so as to put an end to his perfidious projects once for all. Husain Ali Khan interviewed the emperor (23rd February) who humbled himself, begged forgiveness and placed his turban on the latter's head. The Sayyids had the court surrounded by their nominees and on 27th February, 1719, entered the palace with Ajit Singh and their followers, occupied the fort-gates, office-rooms and bed-chambers. Husain Ali Khan posted his men in the city and the Marathas outside its walls. There was a stormy scene inside the palace between the emperor and the wazir, and Farrukh-Siyar being filled with panic, took shelter in the female apartments. There was a tumult and riot in the city It was therefore decided to remove Farrukh-Siyar immediately. On 28th February, 1719 Rafi-ud-darajat, a son of Rafi-us-Shan, was brought out and placed upon the peacock throne and proclaimed emperor. A party of Afghans was sent into the harem to drag Farrukh-Siyar out. This was done, and the deposed emperor was blinded and imprison-

ed. He was strangled to death (27-28 April, 1719), and buried in Humayun's tomb. He had proved to be the most incapable ruler of the house of Babur that had so far occupied the throne of Delhi.

Rafi-ud-darajat, 28th February–4th June, 1719.

He was a son of Rafi-us-Shan and a youth of twenty at the time of his accession (28th February). He was very intelligent, but was badly suffering from consumption. The emperor became an absolute puppet in the hands of the Sayyid brothers, who carried on the administration in his name. There was a rebellion by Niku-Siyar, son of Akbar, who set himself up as emperor in the Agra Fort with Mitra Sen, a Nagar Brahman, as his wazir. Rafi-ud-darajat was deposed on 4th June, 1719, as he was about to sink owing to the disease. He died a week after his deposition.

Rafi-ud-daula *alias* **Shah Jahan II, 6th June–17th Sept., 1719.**

The deposed king's elder brother Rafi-ud-daula was now placed on the throne on June 6, 1719 with the title of Shah Jahan II. He too was consumptive and a puppet in the hands of the Sayyids. During his reign Husain Ali Khan proceeded to Agra, and suppressed Niku-Siyar's rebellion. The latter was arrested and imprisoned, while Mitra Sen committed suicide. Rafi-ud-daula was a very sickly youth. He died on 17th September, 1719.

Muhammad Shah, 1719-1748.

The Sayyids now crowned prince Raushan Akhtar (the son of Jhan Shah) as emperor under the title of Muhammad Shah (28th September, 1719). He was a weak and inexperienced prince and the Sayyids retained all power in their hands. Nizam-ul-Mulk, who was appointed governor of Malwa, left for that province on 3rd March, 1719. Girdhar Bahadur who had succeeded his uncle Chhabela Ram as governor of Allahabad made peace, evacuated the fort of Allahabad (April 1720), and left for Awadh to take charge of that province. There was no love lost between the Sayyid brothers and Nizam-ul-Mulk who in May 1720 invaded Khandesh, which was included in Sayyid Husain Ali's viceroyalty. Therefore, the Sayyids' nephew Dilawar Ali Khan was directed to pursue and punish the Nizam. But the latter meanwhile captured Asirgarh and thereafter Burhanpur, meeting out a gallant treatment to the mother of the Sayyids who was then in Burhanpur. Next, he defeated and

killed Dilawar Ali Khan at Khandwa and thereafter fought with Alam Ali Khan, the nephew and deputy of Husain Ali Khan and defeated and killed him (10th August). The news highly perplexed the Sayyid brothers who after prolonged discussion decided that Husain Ali with the emperor should proceed to the Dakhin to put down Nizam-ul-Mulk, while Abdulla Khan should remain at Delhi in charge of the administration. While the emperor was on his way to the Dakhin, a conspiracy was formed against Husain Ali; the chief conspirator was Muhammad Amin Khan, the leader of the Turani party, who was assisted by several others, including Mir Muhammad Amin, a persian adventurer, and Haidar Ali Khan, superintendent of imperial artillery. On the morning of 9th October, 1720 as Husain Ali was about to leave for his tents after making his obeisance to the emperor who had just entered his camp near Toda Bhim, Haidar Beg, a trooper in Muhammad Amin Khan's contingent, submitted an application to him, and while Husain Ali was reading it, plunged a dagger into the Mir Bakhshi's side and killed him. The emperor was now brought out from his tents to head the army and the murdered Sayyid's property and baggage were plundered. Muhammad Amin Khan was appointed Wazir and promoted to the rank of 8,000 with the title of Itimad-ud-daula. The emperor turned back towards Delhi and fought a battle with Sayyid Abdulla Khan near Bilochpur on 15th November in which the latter was defeated and taken prisoner. Prince Ibrahim who had been placed upon the throne by Sayyid Abdulla on the receipt of the news of Husain Ali Khan's murder was brought before Muhammad Shah and was pardoned, but sent back to his prison at Delhi.

Muhammad Shah made his triumphal entry into Delhi on 23rd November, 1720. As the new wazir Muhammad Amin Khan died on 30th January, 1721, the post was offered to Nizam-ul-Mulk, but pending his arrival from the Dakhin, Inayat-ullah Kashmiri was appointed to officiate for him. Nizam-ul-Mulk arrived at Delhi on 29th January, 1722 and was formally appointed Wazir on 21st February. But he could not pull on well with the emperor and the youthful nobles who would not like to submit to the discipline which this austere relic of Aurangzeb's time wanted to enforce at the Delhi court, and made fun of his dress and manners. Moreover, he was an extremely ambitious man and wanted to add Malwa to his viceroyalty of the six provinces of the Dakhin. He advised the

youthful emperor to pay more attention to the business of the state, to stop farming out of the Khalisa lands, and to reimpose the *jizya* on the Hindus. The advice was rejected and the Nizam, therefore, on the pretext of going out on a hunting expedition, left Delhi on 18th December, 1723 and returned to the Dakhin. Qamar-ud-din Khan, son of Muhammad Amin Khan, was therefore appointed Wazir.

Nizam-ul-Mulk now set himself up practically as an independent ruler of the six subas of the Dakhin, but not without disposing of Mubariz Khan, governor of Hyderabad, who was instigated by the court to oppose him. Mubariz Khan was defeated and killed at the battle of Shakar-Khelda on 11th October, 1724. Nizam-ul-Mulk made Hyderabad his capital and the weak emperor tried to conciliate him by conferring upon him the title of Asaf Jah. The court, however, succeeded in depriving him of the governorship of Gujarat which he had held in addition to the province of the Dakhin. The Nizam had a difficult time in his viceroyalty on account of Maratha incursions. He was defeated by Baji Rao more than once and in order to save his territory he cunningly suggested to the Peshwa to extend the Maratha power in northern India at the expense of the territory of the emperor, the Nizam's suzerain.

Baji Rao welcomed the suggestion and from 1731 began his annual raids into the Mughul territory in northern India. In February 1734 the Marathas captured and occupied Hindaun, 70 miles south of Agra. Although they were dislodged from there in March, next year they sacked Sambhar. In order to appease him the emperor promised to recognise Baji Rao as governor of Malwa. But the Peshwa was not satisfied and demanded the cession of the whole of Malwa, the tracts south of the Chambal and the Hindu places of pilgrimage, such as, Allahabad, Banaras, Gaya and Mathura. He also demanded Maratha recognition to *chauth* and *sardeshmukhi* from the six provinces of the Dakhin and a jagir yielding an annual revenue of fifty lakhs of rupees. These extravagant demands were, of course, rejected and imperial armies were sent to oppose the Peshwa's advance. Baji Rao eluding Burhan-ul-Mulk and Khan Dauran marched to Delhi and burnt its suburbs in March 1737. Next, he proceeded to fight Nizam-ul-Mulk who was commissioned by the emperor to put down the Marathas. Nizam-ul-Mulk was

defeated and compelled to sign a convention near Sironj on 17th January, 1738 promising "to obtain for Baji Rao the whole of Malwa, with sovereignty in the territory between the Narmada and the Chambal and a subsidy of five million rupees".

Two other provinces of the Mughul empire, namely, Awadh and Bangal became virtually independent during Muhammad Shah's reign. A Persian adventurer entitled Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk was appointed governor of Awadh on 9th September, 1722. This man succeeded in converting that province into an independent state, and only nominally called himself governor. Bangal, Bihar and Orissa had constituted a viceroyalty during the reign of Bahadur Shah (1707-12), and were held by his second son Azim-us-Shan. Jafar Khan, who was that prince's deputy in Bangal, was put in charge of the three provinces when Farrukh-Siyar in 1712 proceeded towards Agra to fight for the throne. He remained governor till his death in 1726. Thereafter the latter's son-in-law Shuja-ud-din Muhammad Khan held the provinces, though the nominal governor was Khan Dauran, and on his death on 24th March, 1739, he (Shuja-ud-din) was succeeded by his son Sarfraz Khan. Sarfraz Khan was not a competent administrator. He was defeated and killed by Ali Vardi Khan (Deputy governor of Bihar) on 12th May, 1740. Ali Vardi Khan thus became governor of Bangal, Bihar and Orissa, and was recognised as such by Muhammad Shah. From that date Bangal, Bihar and Orissa became practically independent of Delhi.

The central government had now become so weak that the country was invaded in 1739 by a Persian adventurer, Nadir Shah. Nadir, a Turkish soldier of fortune, after freeing his country from the Afghan invaders, proceeded towards Afghanistan to punish the Afghans who were fleeing into India. He sent two envoys, one after the other, to Delhi to request Muhammad Shah not to permit the Afghan refugees to enter his country. Nadir then captured Kandhar on 24th March, 1738 and entered Ghazni on 11th June. Muhammad Shah had detained his third envoy for one year and had not cared to send a reply to his repeated requests. Consequently, Nadir besieged and captured Kabul on 29th June and proceeded to invade the Panjab, brushing aside the Mughul troops posted at Jamrud and Peshawar. On 27th December he

crossed the Indus at Attock and defeated the governor of Lahore. Proceeding further south he encamped near Karnal on learning that Muhammad Shah was advancing to oppose him. Meanwhile, the emperor whose court had received the rumour of Nadir's invasion with ridicule, was awakened to the sense of the danger to which the country was exposed on learning that the Persian invader had captured Kabul and was on his way to Lahore. It was decided that the emperor in person should proceed to drive away the invader. He reached Karnal at the head of a big army and entrenched himself near the canal of Ali Mardan Khan. Nadir Shah who arrived near Karnal a few days later encamped two leagues to the west of that town. Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk, governor of Awadh, arrived on 24th February to join the emperor at Karnal, but his baggage train which was coming behind was attacked by the Persians, and therefore he mounted to proceed to recover it. The result was the battle of Karnal on 24th February, 1739. Burhan-ul-Mulk was supported by Khan Dauran, whereas Nizam-ul-Mulk and the emperor took their stand a little behind the lines and did not come into contact with the invading troops. Burhan-ul-Mulk was wounded and taken prisoner. Khan Dauran was fatally wounded and taken back to his camp where he died the next day. Nadir Shah won the day and both the armies returned to their respective camps in the evening.

At an interview with the invader Burhan-ul-Mulk gave an exaggerated account of the empire's strength and advised Nadir to accept an indemnity of two crores of rupees and return to Persia. The invader accepted the offer which was confirmed by Muhammad Shah through Nizam-ul-Mulk, who visited Nadir twice for the purpose of negotiations. But when Burhan-ul-Mulk learnt that the post of Mir Bakhshi which had fallen vacant on Khan Dauran's death was conferred on Nizam-ul-Mulk as the reward of his successful negotiations, he was beside himself with rage. He had coveted this office and now that the crafty Nizam had conspired to deprive him of his ambition, he advised Nadir to demand an indemnity of twenty crores. The Persian's cupidity was aroused. He invited the Nizam and imprisoned him and posted his troops round Muhammad Shah's camp. Muhammad Shah twice visited Nadir in his camp and it was decided that the invader would proceed to Delhi to collect the indemnity.

Accompanied by Muhammad Shah, Nadir set out for Delhi and encamped in the Shalamar garden, six miles north of the city, sending the Mughul emperor ahead to make preparations for his reception. Nadir entered Delhi in procession on 20th March and on the next day which was the day of Id-uz-zuha and also the Persian New Year's day, the *Khutba* was recited in Nadir's name in all the mosques of Delhi. On 22nd there took place a riot in the city and some Persians were attacked and killed and rumours spread that Nadir was dead. The invader thereupon ordered a general massacre of the offending inhabitants the next day. This continued for 8 hours and the number of the slain reached 30,000. In the evening Nadir, on Muhammad Shah's request, ordered his men to stop the massacre.

Nadir remained in Delhi upto 15th May and appropriated the imperial treasures including pearls, diamonds, jewels and the famous peacock throne. He laid all the nobles under contribution. Burhan-ul-Mulk was threatened with corporal punishment for his inability to furnish the promised sum of twenty crores in cash. He took poison and died. His successor Safdar Jang paid two crores of rupees in cash and kind, which was Burhan-ul-Mulk's share of the contribution. Nadir left Delhi on 16th May after restoring Muhammad Shah to the throne and warning him against the treacherous conduct of Nizam-ul-Mulk who, he said, was cunning, self-seeking and "more ambitious than became a subject". The booty carried away amounted to 30 crores of rupees in cash, besides jewels, gold and silver utensils and furniture, and other valuable articles, one thousand elephants, seven thousand horses, ten thousand camels, a hundred eunuchs and one hundred and thirty writers and clerks, two hundred builders, a hundred masons and two hundred carpenters. Besides, he deprived the empire of the province of Kabul which he annexed to Persia.

Nadir's invasion paralysed Muhammad Shah and his court and heaped humiliation upon him and the country. But the emperor failed to take a lesson from it. Although he became suspicious of Nizam-ul-Mulk, he could not summon courage to dismiss Qamar-ud-din Khan from wazirship, or take any steps for the reorganisation of administration. Things, therefore, went on as badly as ever. The Maratha raids in Malwa, Gujarat and Bundelkhand and even in the territory north of these provinces continued

as before. Raghuji Bhonsle invaded Bangal, Bihar and Orissa to realise *chauth* and the emperor could do nothing more than requesting Balaji Baji Rao, the new Peshwa, to put down Raghuji Bhonsle. The Peshwa was now formally appointed to the government of Malwa. The province of Katehr passed into the hands of an adventurer named Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela, and became known as Ruhelkhand. Muhammad Shah undertook an expedition against the Ruhela stronghold of Bangarh, 14 miles north-east of Budaun. Ali Muhammad Khan was defeated and taken prisoner, but later released through the intercession of Qamar-ud-din Khan. He returned to Ruhelkhand and reoccupied it.

Early in 1748 the Panjab was invaded by Ahmed Shah Abdali, an Afghan of the Sadozai sect of the Abdali or Durrani tribe, who had become king of Afghanistan on Nadir Shah's fall under the dagger of an assassin at the end of 1747. He was invited to invade India by Shahnawaz Khan, who had usurped the governorship of the Panjab. The invader sacked Lahore and proceeded towards Delhi, but he was encountered by prince Ahmad, son of emperor Muhammad Shah, at Manupur near Machhiwara and defeated and compelled to retire to Kabul (March 1748).

Muhammad Shah died on 26th April, 1748 and was succeeded by his son Ahmad under the title of emperor Ahmad Shah. Muhammad Shah, known to this day as Muhammad Shah Rangila, was a very weak ruler who spent his time in pleasures and left the business of government in the hands of his ministers. During his reign the central government lost its prestige, the army its discipline and morale, and the empire was greatly reduced in size. The six subas of the Dakhin, and the viceroyalties of Awadh, and Bangal, Bihar and Orissa became independent in practice. Malwa, Bundelkhand and Gujarat became virtual possessions of the Marathas. Rajputana became absolutely independent of the emperor and the European traders in southern India began for the first time to entertain ambitious projects of territorial acquisition and sovereignty.

Ahmad Shah, 1748-1754.

Prince Ahmad crowned himself emperor in the Shalamar garden north of Delhi on 28th April, 1748 and assumed the title of Ahmad Shah. He was then a young man of twenty one, and

possessed no experience in administration and no qualities of leadership. He was "vicious, dissipated, perfidious, pusillanimous and utterly worthless". He appointed Safdar Jang, nephew and son-in-law of Burhan-ul-Mulk and governor of Awadh, as his wazir. Muin-ul-Mulk, son of Qamar-ud-din Khan, was appointed governor of the Panjab. Saadat Khan Zulfiqar Jang became Mir Bakhshi. High titles were showered on the chief eunuch Javid Khan who became known as Nawab Bahadur. This man was allowed to become the leader of the court party which was now 'a cabal of women and eunuchs' who dominated the administration and pitted themselves against the great nobles and officers of the empire.

From the outset of his reign Ahmad Shah became a tool in the hands of the court party headed by Nawab Bahadur who plotted against wazir Safdar Jang. At the end of November 1748 an unsuccessful attempt on the wazir's life alienated him from the emperor. The wazir ceased to appear at the court but was soon reconciled. In the early months of the next year a conspiracy was formed to supplant the wazir and Nasir Jang, the second son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, was invited from the Dakhin to assist the emperor. This too ended in smoke. The net results were a split between Safdar Jang and the court party headed by the eunuch Nawab Bahadur and the queen mother Malka-i-Zamani, and utter confusion in the administration.

Safdar Jang's province of Awadh lay on the border of Ruhelkhand which was in the hands of two Afghan tribes, the Ruhelas who were masters of Ruhelkhand proper, and the Bangash Pathans who held Farrukhabad and Kanauj. Muhammad Khan Bangash of Farrukhabad had died in 1743 and was succeeded by his son Qaim Khan. Desirous of weakening the Afghan power in the immediate neighbourhood of his province, Safdar Jang instigated Qaim Khan to attack the Ruhelas. His plan succeeded and Qaim Khan besieged the Ruhelas in Budaun, but was defeated and killed by Saad-ullah Khan, elder son of Ali Muhammad Khan Ruhela. Taking advantage of this, Safdar Jang marched with the emperor to Farrukhabad in December 1748 and occupied the Bangash territory, and besides appropriating sixty lakhs of rupees, imprisoned five of Qaim Khan's brothers in the fortress of Allahabad. He left to the Bangash family only those districts which were originally assigned to Muhammad Khan. He appointed Raja Nawal Rai to

take charge of the annexed districts of the Bangash family and returned to Delhi. During his absence the Afghans revolted, surprised Nawal Rai and killed him (13th August, 1750). The wazir himself who had hastened to the assistance of Nawal Rai was defeated and wounded by Ahmad Khan Bangash at Ram Chatauni between Sahawar and Patiali on 23rd September, 1750. He returned to Delhi to find that in alliance with Nawab Bahadur and Intizam-ud-daula, the emperor and his mother were actively plotting for his overthrow. The plotters were, however, intimidated by the wazir's timely return and abandoned their scheme. But another serious danger threatened the wazir on account of Ahmad Khan Bangash's quick over-running of the most part of Awadh and a part of Allahabad province. Fortunately, the Bangash chief was stoutly resisted before the walls of the Allahabad fort by a band of reckless Naga Sanyasis under Rajendra Giri Gosain who took up Safdar Jang's cause and repelled the Pathan invaders. Safdar Jang had by this time completed his preparations and with the assistance of of the Marathas he defeated Ahmad Khan Bangash near Qaimganj in the last week of March 1751. He then proceeded to besiege the fortress of Fatehgarh which was taken on 28th April, 1751. Ahmad Khan and his ally Saad-ullah Khan Ruhela fled to the hills and were besieged at Chalkiya, 22 miles north-east of Kashipur in Garhwal. Now that the Pathans were defeated, the Marathas became averse to the latter's destruction and adopted an attitude of indifference towards the campaign. The wazir, therefore, agreed to make peace. He pardoned Ahmad Khan Bangash in consideration of a fine of thirty lakhs of rupees (according to another authority 80 lakhs) on the condition that as a security for payment of it he surrendered half of his territory till such time as the whole sum was paid off. The wazir restored half of the Bangash estate to Ahmad Khan and delivered the other half, that is, 16½ parganas to his Maratha allies *in lieu* of thirty lakhs of rupees which he owed to them for their assistance in the campaign. The country surrendered to the Marathas extended from Kol (Aligarh) in the north to Kora Jahanabad in the south-east. The Ruhelas now returned to their homes. This peace was made early in February 1752.

During the wazir's absence from the capital Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded the Panjab. This was his third invasion; the first having taken place (January-March 1748) during the last

days of Muhammad Shah and the second early in 1749. In the course of the second invasion he had defeated Muin ul-Malk, governor of the Panjab, and compelled him to sign an agreement promising an annual payment of fourteen thousand rupees. As Muin-ul-Mulk failed to remit the promised tribute regularly, Ahmad crossed the Indus for the third time, besieged him near Lahore and forced him to recognise the invader as his suzerain. At this time Safdar Jang had, after his victory over the Indian Pathans, proceeded to chastise Raja Balwant Singh of Banaras. The emperor in fright sent frantic orders of recall of the wazir, asking him to bring the Marathas with him to fight the invader. Safdar Jang entered into an alliance with Malhar Rao Holkar and Jayappa Sindhia (2nd April, 1752) who bound themselves on behalf of the Peshwa to defend the dwindling empire from its enemies, including Ahmad Shah Abdali, in return for a promise of fifty lakhs of rupees in cash, the grant of *chauth* from the Panjab and Sind and the appointment of the Peshwa as governor of Ajmer and Agra including the Faujdari of Nagaur and Mathura. Accompanied by a Maratha force 50,000 strong, the wazir returned to Delhi on 5th May, 1752 to find that the emperor had already ceded the provinces of the Panjab and Multan to the invader who had left for Kabul. The wazir was thoroughly disgusted, and as the Maratha troops who had accompanied him began plundering the villages around Delhi, he had to pay Malhar Rao a few lakhs of rupees and persuade him to join Nizam-ul-Mulk's eldest son Ghazi-ud-din Khan, recently appointed governor of the six provinces of the Dakhin, and assist him to take charge of his new office. Though the Marathas had thus been sent away, there was now a complete breach between the wazir and the Nawab Bahadur Javid Khan who had usurped the real power and reduced Safdar Jang to a mere cypher. The wazir invited him to a feast and had him murdered on 6th September, 1752. This led to a complete breach between the wazir and the emperor and resulted in a civil war between them. For six months (4th May–6th November, 1753) a long and bitter fighting took place in the streets of Delhi. Ghyazi-ud-din Khan's son entitled Imad-ul-Mulk, who had been appointed Amir-ul-Umra, played an important part in the war and won over most of Safdar Jang's Sunni troops to the imperial cause, whereas the wazir called his ally Suraj Mal, the Jat Raja of Bharatpur, to his support. In the end Safdar Jang was beaten and a peace was made confirming the latter in the viceroyalty of Awadh and

Allahabad. Safdar Jang left the vicinity of Delhi for Faizabad on 7th November, 1753, and Intizam-ud-daula, son of Qamr-ud-din Khan and an uncle of Imad-ul-Mulk, was now confirmed in the prime-minister's post to which he had been appointed during the civil war.

The Marathas, who had been invited by Imad-ul-Mulk during the war with Safdar Jang, arrived at Delhi after the conclusion of the peace and retirement of the ex-wazir, and the ambitious Mir Bakhshi employed them to punish Suraj Mal for his alliance with Safdar Jang. Imad-ul-Mulk personally accompanied Malhar Rao to the siege of the Jat fortresses of Deeg and Kumbher, and pressed the emperor to lend some battering canon without which the besiegers could not hope to capture the forts. Suspicious of the ambitious designs of Imad-ul-Mulk, the emperor on the advice of his new wazir, refused to comply, and the enraged Mir Bakhshi instigated an attack on the wazirs' House, but failed to dislodge him. Nevertheless, the emperor and the wazir became apprehensive and opened negotiations with Suraj Mal who advised the recall of Safdar Jang from Awadh. They proceeded from Delhi and reached Sikandarabad at the head of an army to watch Imad-ul-Mulk's movements. The latter instigated Malhar Rao Holkar to surprise the emperor's camp. On the report of Malhar Rao's appearance in the vicinity the emperor, his mother and wazir fled towards Delhi, leaving the army to be plundered by the Marathas the next morning. The Marathas now raised the siege of Deeg, and Imad-ul-mulk and Malhar Rao marched to Delhi, and compelled the emperor to dismiss Intizam-ud-daula and appoint Imad-ul-Mulk as wazir. On June 2, 1754 the new wazir deposed Ahmad Shah, sent him to prison and placed Aziz-ud-din, second son of Jahandar Shah, on the throne with the title of Alamgir II. The ex-ruler and his mother were blinded a week later.

Alamgir II, 1754-1759.

Alamgir II, fifty-five years of age at the time of his accession, had spent all his life in the prison and had, therefore, no experience of war or civil administration. He, however, loved to read books on history, disliked pleasures and said his prayers regularly. But, at the same time, he was extremely weak and devoid of firmness of character and capacity for leadership. Throughout his brief reign

of about five years, he remained a puppet in the hands of his wazir Imad-ul-Mulk, who was a highly unprincipled and selfish courtier, and who misappropriated the royal revenues, starved the imperial family and persecuted the emperor's eldest son, Ali Gauhar entitled Shah Alam, whom he drove away from Delhi to seek refuge in the eastern provinces. The wazir foolishly dreamt of forming an anti-Maratha coalition in order to drive them out of northern India. This enterprise ended in nothing. In fact, the Marathas grew more powerful than ever, established their direct rule over Lahore (April-June 1759) and plundered the upper Doab. Imad-ul-Mulk for the most part of his wazirship remained dependent on Maratha bayonets.

One of the first acts of the wazir was his attempt to recover the Panjab from the Abdali's domination. Muin-ul-Mulk, governor of the Panjab on behalf of Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul, died in November 1753. The Abdali permitted his infant son to take his place and the child's mother Mughlani Begam to act as his regent. The boy governor died soon after and Mughlani Begam was confirmed in his place. Under her the affairs of the Panjab were mismanaged and anarchy prevailed throughout the province. Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk took this opportunity to recover the Panjab and set out from Delhi taking the emperor with him; but had to return from Panipat on account of a fearful mutiny in his army. Within a few months he proceeded again and from Ludhiana sent a powerful contingent of his troops to Lahore to bring Mughlani Begam as a prisoner. This was done and the wazir appointed Adina Beg Khan, a traitor responsible for every trouble in the Panjab, as governor of the province, who paid thirty lakhs of rupees for his appointment. But the wazir's interference in the affairs of the Panjab led to the fourth invasion of India by Ahmad Shah Abdali who had considered that province as his own. The Afghan king marched on Lahore and Adina Beg Khan fled to Hissar in terror. The invader then proceeded by forced marches to Delhi. Imad-ul-Mulk in alarm prevailed on Mughlani Begam, his mother-in-law, to intercede for him, and surrendered himself to the Shah. The Abdali forgave him and confirmed him as wazir.

The invader entered Delhi on 28th January, 1757, met Alamgir II, ordered the imperial city to be sacked and forced contributions to be realised from all nobles, officers and inhabitants. Many

people fled and some committed suicide to save their honour. The invader stayed in the city for about a month, married his son prince Timur with the daughter of Alamgir II, and sent an army to punish the Jat king Suraj Mal for his alliance with Safdar Jang. A few days later he himself proceeded towards Agra. On the advice of Imad-ul-Mulk a detachment of his troops was sent into the Doab to collect tribute from Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh and other notables. Shuja-ud-daula met the invader at Sandi, near Bilgram, and through Saad-ullah Khan Ruhela who had recently become his friend, an under-standing was arrived at between the parties without fighting. Shuja-ud-daula paid five lakhs of ruppes in cash and made vague promises to pay more. The invading troops with Imad-ul-Mulk, thereupon, returned to Farrukhabad, and were recalled by the Abdali. The contingent that was despatched against Suraj Mal returned dis-appointed. The Jat king spun out long negotiations and in the end paid nothing.

The Abdali had sent another force to Mathura. This sacked and plundered the town and massacred a large number of unarmed pilgrims. Fortunately an epidemic broke out in the Afghan army which caused great mortality and compelled Ahmad Shah to return. Near Delhi Alamgir II met him and complained of his treatment by wazir Imad-ul-Mulk. The invader appointed Najib Khan Ruhela as Mir Bakhshi, and conferred on him the title of Najib-ud-daula and entrusted him with the duty of protecting the emperor. He married a virgin daughter of Muhammad Shah and took with him the latter's two widows, besides several other women of the royal family. The booty carried away was worth several crores.

After the Abdali's departure in 1757, the emperor placed all the districts round the capital under Najib-ud-daula who appropriated most of the revenues of these districts for himself and starved the royal family. Alamgir found Najib even worse than Imad-ul-Mulk. An upstart that he was, Najib treated the emperor "with a rough-ness unknown to the nobly-born wazir". It was at this time that Imad-ul-Mulk made peace with the Marathas and with their assis-tance besieged Najib on 11th August, 1757. His object was to have his nominee Ahmad Khan Bangash appointed as Mir Bakhshi in place of Najib and to remove the latter from the court. Najib sur-rendered after forty-five days' siege and retired to his estate in

Saharanpur and Najibabad. Imad-ul-Mulk took charge of the administration and the Maratha influence was re-established at the capital. Raghunath Rao, the Maratha leader, was now free to proceed to the Panjab and drive away prince Timur, Ahmad Shah Abdali's son and agent (April 1758). He appointed Adina Beg Khan as governor of that province and returned to Delhi *en route* for the Dakhin, leaving an agent and a small army at the capital. On Adina Beg's death Sabaji Sindhia became governor of the Panjab.

After his restoration with Maratha help, wazir Imad-ul-Mulk took steps to re-establish his hold over the Emperor and compelled him to recall his eldest son Ali Gauhar from the latter's jagir in the Rohtak and Hissar districts where Alamgir II had sent him for raising an army to oppose the selfish wazir. On his return the prince was besieged by the wazir, but the former cut his way through the enemy troops and reached the camp of Vithal Rao Maratha on the other side of the Yamuna. Vithal Rao escorted the prince to Farrukhabad where he was well-received by Ahmad Khan Bangash's men and supplied with necessities. Next he took refuge with Najib-ud-daula at Saharanpur. The latter entertained him for eight months and advised him to attempt the reconquest of Bangal, Bihar and Orissa. The prince, therefore, marched to Awadh and was hospitably received by Shuja-ud-daula near Lucknow in January 1758. From Lucknow he proceeded to Allahabad, the deputy governor of which province Muhammad Quli Khan, joined him in an invasion of Patna.

The Maratha power reached its zenith after Raghunath Rao's conquest of the Panjab and establishment of a garrison at Lahore in April 1758. Their potential enemy in northern India was the ex-Mir Bakhshi Najib-ud-daula and Dattaji Sindhia now proceeded to crush him. Najib took shelter at Shakartal, 18 miles west of Muzaffarnagar and was besieged there by Dattaji. The siege dragged on throughout the rainy season of 1759 and Najib sent frantic appeals to his kinsmen in Ruhelkhand, Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh and Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul to save him from destruction. Knowing full well that the Ruhelas would proceed to the relief of Najib, a Maratha army under Govind Pant crossed the Ganga into Ruhelkhand and drove away the Ruhelas into the hills, depriving Najib of hopes of relief from that quarter. But Shuja-ud-daula, at the end of the rainy

season, defeated Govind Pant near Chandpur, and prepared to proceed to Najib's relief at Shakartal, when he received the news that Ahmad Shah Abdali was proceeding from Kabul to assist Najib-ud-daula. So Shuja-ud-daula returned to Awadh and Dattaji raised the siege of Shakartal, re-crossed the Yamuna and proceeded to the North to oppose the invader.

Meanwhile, the quarrel between Alamgir II and his wazir, Imad-ul-Mulk, had reached its climax. The emperor had not only sent help to Najib-ud-daula at Shakartal, but was also corresponding with the Abdali invader. The wazir, therefore, prevailed upon him to go to Kotila Firoz Shah, outside the royal palace, on the pretext of taking him to visit a hermit, and had him assassinated there (29th November, 1759). The ex-wazir Intizam-ud-daula was put to death the next day. The wazir then proclaimed Muhi-ul-Millat, grandson of Kam Bakhsh, as emperor under the title of Shah Jahan III. After this he marched towards Shakartal to assist Dattaji Sindhia, but learnt on the way that the Maratha chief had raised the siege and was proceeding towards Lahore to fight the Abdali invader.

Shah Alam II, 1759-1806.

Alamgir II's eldest son Ali Gauhar who had been sent out by his father to see a fortune for himself, was in Bihar at the time of his father's death. His first invasion of Bihar had terminated without success and he was compelled to retire to Rewa to spend the rainy season there. At the end of October 1759, he left Rewa for Bihar and was encamped at Gothauli, five miles north of the modern Sone East-Bank Railway Station where he received the news of his father's death on 20th December, 1759. The very day he proclaimed himself emperor under the title of Shah Alam II. He appointed Shuja-ud-daula his wazir. But as Delhi was in the hands of Imad-ul-Mulk who was bitterly hostile to him, and a long struggle was about to take place between the Marathas and the Afghan invader Ahmad Shah Abdali, Shah Alam did not venture to proceed to the imperial capital to take his seat on his ancestral throne. He continued to reside in the eastern provinces for over twelve years, during most of which time the throne of Delhi remained vacant.

As has been already mentioned Ahmad Shah Abdali on the receipt of Najib's appeal for aid, crossed the Indus and entered the

Panjab in August 1759 and drove away Sabaji Sindhia, the Maratha governor of the province. From Lahore he proceeded towards Delhi and as the country west of the Yamuna had been denuded of supplies on account of Maratha activity, he crossed the river into the northern Doab, sending a detachment of his army by the western route to fight Dattaji Sindhia, who had raised the siege of Shakartal and was marching towards Sarhind. The invader was joined by Najib-ud-daula, Ahmad Khan Bangash, Saad-ullah Khan and all the other Ruhela chiefs of Ruhelkhand. He overtook Dattaji at Bararighat, 10 miles north of Delhi, attacked him in flank, and the brave Maratha, sending his nephew Jankoji to the Dakhin to raise an army, dismounted from his horse and died fighting bravely (9th January, 1760). After this victory, the Abdali reached Khizrabad, south of the capital on 14th January, and sent letter to Suraj Mal Jat and all the rulers of Rajputana calling upon them to pay him tribute and join his army in putting down the Marathas.

Meanwhile, Malhar Rao Holkar who planned a campaign to harass the Afghans, crossed into the Doab and plundered a convoy of supplies and treasures, which was sent by Ahmad Khan Bangash to the invader; but he was routed by an enemy force at Sikandrabad. The Abdali, after occupying Delhi, encamped for the rainy season at Sikandrabad so as to be within easy reach of the Afghans in the Doab and Ruhelkhand.

On the receipt of the news of the Abdali's invasion and the disaster of Bararighat, the Peshwa despatched a strong army under his cousin Sadashiva Rao Bhau for driving away the invader and re-establishing the Maratha supremacy in northern India. On crossing the Chambal the Bhau was joined by Suraj Mal of Bharatpur with 30,000 men, but the Rajput chiefs of Rajasthan declined to move and sat on the fence. An attempt to win over Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh also failed, for he was persuaded by Najib-ud-daula to join the Abdali (18th July, 1760) on the plea that the latter's cause was that of Islam. Without being dismayed, the Bhau proceeded to Delhi, occupied the imperial city and drove away the Abdali's agent. On account of differences of opinion about the general policy and the mode of warfare to be followed, Surajmal and Imad-ul-Mulk deserted the Maratha cause and retired to the Jat fortress of Ballabhgarh. The Bhau deposed Shah Jahan III and proclaimed the accession of Shah Alam,

nominating the latter's son prince Javan Bakht to act for his father during his absence. Shuja-ud-daula was appointed wazir. At the end of the rainy season the Marathas single-handed marched from Delhi towards Sarhind in order to occupy the Panjab and cut off the Abdali's retreat. On 17th October the Bhau captured the fort of Kunjpura, 6 miles north-east of Karnal and proceeded towards Sarhind.

The Abdali invader, who had spent the rainy season of 1760 at Sikandrabad, crossed the Yamuna at Bhagat, 25 miles north of Delhi, on learning the Maratha movement towards the Panjab and proceeded to pursue the Bhau. The latter thereupon turned back and encamped at Panipat. The Abdali arrived there three days later. The Marathas fortified their camps and decided to fight a pitched battle.

For more than two months the two armies lay facing each other with daily skirmishes occuring between their scouts. The first brush occurred on 1st November, 1760, after which there were three fights on a large scale. The final battle was fought on 14th January, 1761 in which the Maratha army which had suffered from two months' starvation and lack of equipment, was completely routed, its commander Sadashiva Rao Bhau died fighting bravely to his last breath. The Peshwa's son Vishwas Rao, who was the generalissimo of the army, was also slain along with most of the notables, officers and chiefs. Mahadji Sindhia and Malhar Rao Holkar alone among the notables escaped from the field. The entire camp with its equipage was taken possession of by the enemy who made many prisoners.

The third battle of Panipat shattered the dream of a Maratha empire for the whole of India. The Maratha confederacy was broken to pieces, and although Maratha chiefs like Mahadji Sindhia in Gwalior, Raghuji Bhonsle in Nagpur and Berar, Malhar Rao Holkar in Malwa and Damaji Gaikwar in Gujarat, recovered portions of the Maratha empire, "the Peshwa's authority was broken and cohesion was lost". This battle by giving a crushing blow to the Maratha power cleared the way for the British to the sovereignty of northern India.

Ahmad Shah Abdali was not anxious to follow up his victory, occupy the country and rule over it. His troops clamoured and

demanded arrears of pay and compelled him to return to Kabul. He nominated Shah Alam as emperor and Imad-ul-Mulk as wazir. He delivered charge of Delhi to Najib-ud-daula and confirmed him in the rank and title of Amir-ul-Umra. The Abdali's attempt to conclude a peace with the Peshwa and Suraj Mal failed and he left Delhi for Kabul on 20th March, 1761.

The emperor Shah Alam being away in Bihar, the throne of Delhi remained vacant from 1760 to 1771. During most of this period (1761-1770) Najib-ud-daula was incharge of the administration of the capital city and the dwindled empire. He acted like a virtual dictator and carried on ceaseless warfare with the Jats and the Sikhs, but failed to permanently crush either of them. At the beginning of 1767, Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded the Panjab for the last time and summoned Najib-ud-daula to wait on him. But the Sikhs had grown so powerful that they could not be subdued and the invader was obliged to return to Afghanistan and Najib to Delhi (on 30th July, 1767). In March 1768 Najib, who had grown old and weak, left the government of Delhi in the hands of his son Zabita Khan and retired to Najibabad. But he was greatly harassed by the Marathas, who after the disaster of Panipat returned for the first time to northern India early in 1770. Conscious of the fact that Najib was responsible for the frustration of their scheme of a Maratha empire in Hindustan, they looked upon this Ruhela chief as their real enemy and decided to crush him once for all. But there was a difference of opinion in the Maratha camp about the policy and plan of war to be followed against him. The head of the Maratha army Ram Chandra Ganesh was in favour of accepting Najib's offer of co-operation. Tukoji Holkar was Najib's hereditary friend and there-fore supported Ram Chandra Ganesh. Mahadji Sindhia, on the other hand, was for complete subjugation of this Ruhela chief. When the matter was referred to the Peshwa, he preferred the demands of political expediency and agreed with Ram Chandra Ganesh. In view of the Maratha dissensions it was not difficult for Najib to play off one section of them against the other and to escape destruction. He had now come to the end of his days and wisely realising that the Maratha supremacy was about to be re-established in Hindustan, "he placed Zabita Khan's hand in Tukoji's praying to the latter to be as kind to the son as Malhar had been to the father, and then sent the Maratha Sardars away, escorted by Zabita, and

himself set out for his home to die." His death occurred on 31st October, 1770.

During the period of Najib's dictatorship at Delhi, the emperor Shah Alam was in exile in Bihar where he made three unsuccessful attempts to conquer that province from the English who had set up Mir Jafar as nawab of Bangal, Bihar and Orissa. His first siege of Patna which terminated in April 1759 was undertaken in his capacity as the crown prince. The second invasion of Bihar took place in 1760 after he had crowned himself emperor. He besieged Raja Ram Narain, the deputy governor in Patna, but an English army under Knox came up by repeated marches and compelled the emperor to raise the siege (30th April, 1760) and retire to the back of the river Yamuna. At the end of the rainy season the emperor accompanied by the French Commander Jean Law, invaded Bihar for the third and last time. But he was defeated by Carnac on 15th January, 1761. As the English "were eager to placate him and remove the taint of illegality from their late measures against him," they waited on him and escorted him to Patna with honour. There Mir Qasim whom the English had raised to the nawabship after deposing Mir Jafar, waited on him (12th March) and paid him homage and tribute. The emperor confirmed Mir Qasim as nawab. The English in return allotted to the emperor Rs. 1800/- a day for his daily expenses. Shah Alam left Patna *en-route* for Delhi to instal himself on his ancestral throne at the capital. Wazir Shuja-ud-daula met him at Sarai Sayyid Razi on 19th June and the emperor went into cantonment at Jajmau to spend the rainy season there.

Shah Alam could not, however, proceed to Delhi after the rains, as he found himself powerless to take the administration from the hands of Najib-ud-daula, who was now ruling over Delhi as a dictator. Shuja-ud-daula was not anxious to help the emperor and took him to Bundelkhand to recover that province from the hands of Raja Hindu Pati, the great-grandson of Chhatra Sal Bundela; but the expedition failed (1762). The emperor wasted another year, after which he was obliged to join Shuja-ud-daula in a war against the English who had driven out Mir Qasim from Bangal and Bihar. The allies were defeated at the battle of Baksar (23rd October, 1764) and the English now opened negotiations with the emperor who had been insulted by his Wazir and was, therefore, willing to make peace

with the victors. After Shuja-ud-daula's flight they lodged the emperor at Allahabad where on August 16, 1765, Shah Alam conferred the Diwani of Bangal, Bihar and Orissa on the English East India Company. The emperor remained under the English tutelage from 1760 to 1771. But all the time he was very eager to go to Delhi, for in spite of a settled income from the annual tribute of twenty-six lakhs of rupees from Bangal he felt it humiliating to continue to reside under the foreign domination. The English commander posted there frequently insulted the emperor. Moreover, after the death of Najib-ud-daula, his son and successor Zabita Khan, had presumed to enter the ladies' apartments in the fort of Delhi and dishonoured some of the ladies of the harem, including Shah Alam's sister Khair-un-nisa, and repeated letters from the queen mother reached Allahabad calling on the emperor to go to Delhi and save the honour of the royal family. So when the Marathas returned to northern India in the beginning of 1770, the emperor opened negotiations with them and with their assistance proceeded to Delhi, where he reached on 6th January, 1772.

Shah Alam's task was a difficult one. He found the Delhi treasure empty and the imperial family reduced to poverty and starvation. He had promised to pay forty lakhs of rupees to the Marathas as the price of his restoration and the cession to them of Meerut and seven other parganas and also the districts of Kora Jahanabad and Kara Manikpur. He had also to discharge the arrears into which the salary of his troops had fallen for a number of months. To get the money for fulfilling these obligations an expedition was organised against Zabita Khan, who was besieged in Pathargarh, but the money obtained from him and other Ruhelas was not adequate enough for the payment of the Maratha dues and the latter attacked Delhi. A battle took place between the Maratha and the emperor's troops led by Mirza Najaf Khan in which the latter was defeated (January 17, 1773). The emperor had to submit, and appoint Zabita Khan (who was supported by the Marathas) as Mir Bakhshi, and to dismiss Najaf Khan from his service. He also granted Kora and Allahabad to the Marathas. But the emperor's attempt to recover the crown lands and his privy-purse-state failed and poverty continued to haunt the court. Shah Alam remained a helpless puppet in the hands of his ministers and the Marathas. Mirza Najaf Khan who acted as Minister from

November 1779 till his death on 6th April, 1782 reduced the Jats, but failed to rejuvenate the fallen empire and to place its finances on sound basis. His successors, Mirza Shafi and Afra-Siyab (1782-1784), were much less competent and failed miserably. Mahadji Sindhia became Vakil-Mutlaq (regent) in November 1784. He conquered Deeg and Agra from the Jats and Aligarh from Afra-Siyab. He had to fight the Gosains in the Doab and the Sikhs to the north-west of Delhi, and subsequently became entangled in Rajasthan, from where he had sought to realise tribute. During his absence from Delhi there were intrigues against him and he was thrown out of court. Ghulam Qadir Ruhela, son of Zabita Khan and grandson of Najib-ud-daula, succeeded in getting himself appointed Mir Bakhshi in September 1787. He turned against the emperor, obtained possession of his palace and deposed Shah Alam on 30th July, 1788. He took out the old monarch's eyes with his dagger (10th August) making him completely blind, insulted him, and the ladies of his *harem* and dug out the floor of the imperial store-houses to appropriate whatever money he could find. Never before in the history of India was the Mughul ruling family subjected to such humiliation and suffering as at the hands of this Ruhela ruffian in July-August, 1788. The blind old emperor sent frantic appeals to Mahadji Sindhia to return to Delhi and impose condign punishment on Ghulam Qadir. Sindhia recovered Delhi city and fort early in October. Ghulam Qadir fled and was hunted down and captured on 31st December, 1788. The emperor wrote to Mahadji Sindhia to put the prisoner to death, otherwise he would abdicate and go away to Mecca. So at Mahadji Sindhia's orders Ghulam Qadir and the traitor Manzur Ali eunuch through whom the Ruhela had entered the palace, were put to death (2-4 March, 1789). Shah Alam was thus avenged.

Early in 1792 Mahadji Sindhia quitted northern India in order to pay a visit to the Peshwa in Poona. He died there on 12th February, 1794 and the court of Delhi again became a scene of helplessness and intrigue. In September 1803 the imperial city was captured by Lord Lake from Mahadji Sindhia's successor Daulat Rao Sindhia. Shah Alam now became a pensioner of the British. He died in 1806.

Shah Alam was succeeded by his son Akbar II as the head of the Royal establishment in the Red Fort of Delhi and to the

imperial title only by courtesy. Like his father he too was a pensioner of the British and died in 1837. His son Bahadur Shah II was allowed to retain the nominal imperial dignity. He participated in the mutiny of 1857, was tried by the British and deported to Rangoon where he died a few years later.

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CHAPTER XI

MARATHA ASCENDANCY (1707-1761)

Shahu, 1707-1748.

Shivaji, nick-named Shahu, was captured along with his mother Yesu Bai and several other members of the Maratha royal family on the fall of Raigarh on 13th November, 1689 and taken to Aurangzeb's camp to be lodged there. He was then seven years of age. He had to pass seventeen years and a half in captivity, and although he was provided with ordinary comforts of life and educated under the kindly eye of Zinat-un-Nisa, a daughter of Aurangzeb, he had little hope of regaining his freedom. In fact, an uncertain fate seemed to await him. It was apprehended that he would be converted to Islam or put to death. Aurangzeb once seriously desired to make Shahu a Muslim, and gave up the idea on Zinat-un-Nisa's entreaty, but not until he had converted two of Shahu's relatives to Islam. Shahu's clever mother Yesu Bai lulled Aurangzeb's suspicion by feigning an attitude of hostility towards Raja Ram and declaring that her son and herself were quite safe under the emperor's protection. Now and then Shahu was brought before the emperor to pay him his respects and Aurangzeb felt satisfied about his manners and loyalty.

In the Mughul camp Shahu learnt reading and writing Marathi and to speak Hindi. He was also taught riding, hunting and swordsmanship within the limits of the camp. He acquired some knowledge of the Muslim faith and developed respect for it on account of his intimate contact with the Mughul court. In 1703 he married two ladies. Towards the end of Aurangzeb's life the Mughuls suffered from many privations. Shahu, his mother and followers had to share the suffering and to borrow money to meet their daily expenditure.

On Aurangzeb's death and his son Azam Shah's accession, Shahu was presented to the latter by Zulfiqar Khan who begged

that the Maratha prince might be released and sent back home on the conditions that he would remain loyal to the Mughul throne and whenever called upon would serve the emperor with a contingent of troops. His contention was that such a step would create schism among the Marathas and make them impotent for evil. But as Azam was preparing for a contest with his brother Bahadur Shah, he did not take a definite decision and proceeded to cross the Narmada accompanied by Shahu and his household. Shahu became impatient and on the advice of his Mughul friends left the camp on 18th May, 1707 at Doraha, twenty miles north-west of Bhopal. Azam could not afford to take any action as he was about to engage in a death struggle with Bahadur Shah. He was defeated and killed at Jajau near Agra in June 1707. Shahu, therefore, continued his journey with a composed mind.

With a handful of followers, Shahu crossed the Narmada and proceeded via Bijagarh and Sultanpur into Western Khandesh. At Bijagarh he was joined by Mohan Singh Rawal and at Sultanpur by a few other Maratha chiefs. He was cordially welcomed in Maharashtra and among those who espoused his cause early, Parsoji Bhonsle, the ancestor of the future rulers of Nagpur, Balaji Vishvanath, the future Peshwa and Nemaji Sindhia were the most important. Shahu spent June and July in Khandesh and reached Ahmadnagar in August, planning to proceed ahead and capture Satara which was then the capital of the Maratha state. Tara Bai declared that Shahu was an impostor and had no right to the kingdom which had been lost by his father Shambhuji. The present state, she said, was created by her husband Raja Ram and its lawful ruler was her young son Shivaji II. She sent an army under Dhanaji Jadhav to check Shahu's advance by force, and the latter had to prepare for a contest with his aunt (Tara Bai). A battle was fought at Khed (November 1707) on the bank of the Bhima in which Tara Bai's Pratinidhi Parash Ram Pant was defeated and put to flight, and Dhanaji, her commander-in-chief, who had been won over on the eve of the contest, played no part. Dhanaji now joined Shahu and was appointed *Senapati*. Khando Balal was raised to the office of the Chitnis. Many other notable officers of Tara Bai deserted her and went over to Shahu, who marched in triumph to Satara and performed his coronation on 22nd January, 1708. Tara Bai and her son had already abandoned Satara and taken shelter in Panhala. Shahu

captured that fort also compelling Tara Bai to flee to Rangna and from there to Malvan on the west coast. But she soon returned, established herself finally at Panhala and secured the adhesion of Chandra Sen, Shahu's Senapati and several other notable chiefs. She claimed *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from the Mughul Dakhin and by her activity and diplomacy made Shahu's position shaky during 1711 and 1712. But fortunately for Shahu, Tara Bai was thrown out of power in 1714 as the result of a palace intrigue. Rajas Bai, another widow of Raja Ram, contrived to put Tara Bai and her son Shivaji II into prison and place her son Shambhaji on the throne with herself as regent. Shambhaji established himself at Kolhapur and continued intriguing against Shahu and playing in the hands of Nizam-ul-Mulk. Shahu defeated him and dictated to him the treaty of the Warna in 1731, by which the territory south of the Warna was to belong to Shambhaji, while that on the north to Shahu.

Balaji Vishvanath appointed Peshwa, 1713.

While engaged in the struggle with Tara Bai, Shahu did not neglect the conquest and consolidation of northern Maharashtra which constituted the heart of his patrimony. So he sent his troops to bring Baglan and Khandesh under his effective possession. His Senapati, Dhanaji Jadhav, died in June 1708 and he appointed the latter's son Chandra Sen in his father's place. But Chandra Sen had leanings towards Tara Bai's party and, therefore, as a safeguard against any possible treachery, Shahu raised Balaji Vishvanath to the post of *Senakarte* (Organiser of Forces), a new post created for exercising a check on the Senapati. Balaji Vishvanath was an able and trusted servant of Shahu who gave him his confidence and raised himself to the office of Peshwa or prime-minister in 1713.

Balaji's ancestors were Deshmukhs of the village of Shrivardhan on the west coast under the Sidis of Janjira. He was employed as a clerk in the salt works at Chiplun from where he migrated to the upper region of the Western Ghats some time in the eighties of the seventeenth century. In 1689 he was a revenue clerk under Ram Chandra Amatya and subsequently as Sar-Subah of the districts of Poona and Daulatabad. As Aurangzeb was encamped in this very region in 1705, Balaji Vishvanath who was in the service of the Maratha king in the same districts, must have come into close contact with the Mughul court. It is certain that he made friends with some

of Aurangzeb's officers and established contact with Shahu who resided in the Mughul camp. Shahu seems to have formed a good opinion of his ability, loyalty and character. Balaji was one of the first notable men to join Shahu after the latter's release and to render him conspicuous service by clearing opposition to him and winning over to his side important elements in Maharashtra. He was, therefore, appointed Sena Karte, as we have already seen. When Chandra Sen, Shahu's Senapati, quarrelled with Balaji and resigned his post in a huff and went over to Tara Bai who was endeavouring to recover her lost possessions, Balaji's ability and devotion saved the situation. He cleverly managed to win over Kanhoji Angre (a staunch supporter of Tara Bai and equally staunch enemy of Shahu), the warden of the west coast and head of the Maratha navy, to Shahu's cause and persuaded him to withdraw his relentless war against the king. Shahu in recognition of these services raised Balaji Vishvanath to the position of Peshwa (prime-minister) on 27th November, 1713.

Shahu's treaty with the Mughul emperor, 1719.

Shahu was inspired by genuine feelings of loyalty to the Mughul throne. Although he evaded complying with Bahadur Shah's request to wait on him, he sent him presents and begged him to issue Sanads confirming to him the grant of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. Bahadur Shah's death, the war of succession among his sons, and a mighty revolution in Delhi culminating in the death of a series of princes, made no difference to him. The Sayyid brothers who were the king-makers at Delhi were disliked by emperor Farrukh-Siyar, who, though he had gained the throne with the Sayyid's help, intrigued to bring about their overthrow. Sayyid Hussain Ali, the Mir Bakhshi, had, therefore, to proceed to the Dakhin to take charge of its governorship and safeguard his party's interest in that part of the empire. While in the Dakhin, he received reports of fresh intrigues at the court against his elder brother Wazir Abdulla Khan. So he decided to deal a decisive blow at Farrukh-Siyar and sought Shahu's assistance requesting him to place at his disposal a powerful contingent of Maratha troops. As the result of the negotiations it was agreed: (1) That the emperor would deliver possession to Shahu of all the territories known as Shivaji's '*Swaraj*" (original dominions) including the forts therein. (2) That such territories as had recently been acquired by the Marathas in Khandesh,

Berar, Gondwana, Hyderabad and Karnatak would also be ceded to Shahu. (3) That the Marathas would be allowed to collect *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from all the six provinces of the Mughul Dakhin. In return of *Chauth*, Shahu would place a contingent of 15,000 troops at the disposal of the emperor, and in return for *Sardeshmukhi*, he will hold himself responsible for maintaining order in the Dakhin preventing robbery and rebellions. (4) That Shahu would not molest Shambhaji of Kolhapur. (5) That Shahu should pay an annual tribute of 10 lakhs of rupees to the emperor. (6) That the emperor would release and send back from Delhi Shahu's mother Yesu Bai, his wife, his brother Madan Singh and other members of the Maratha royal family with their attendants who were detained at Delhi.

Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan agreed to these terms and promised to get them ratified by the emperor. Balaji Vishvanath and Khande Rao Dabhade at the head of 15,000 troops joined Husain Ali on an expedition to Delhi. The Sayyids deposed Farrukh-Siyar and raised to the throne Rafi-ud-Darajat, who ratified the treaty. Consequently, sanads for the grant of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* were prepared and delivered to the Peshwa. They are dated March 13, and March 25, 1719, respectively. Shahu's mother Yesu Bai and other members of the family were released. Henceforth Shahu acquired the legal right to the thirty-five percent of the revenues of the six Mughul subas of the Dakhin, but as a vassal of the emperor.

Death of Balaji Vishvanath; his personality and character.

Balaji Vishvanath died on 12th April, 1720. He left behind him two sons and two daughters, the eldest son Baji Rao then aged nineteen succeeded his father as Peshwa.

Balaji Vishvanath was a Chitwan Brahman from Konkan, but had migrated to the Maharashtra proper (Desh). He was a self-taught and self-made man, and had risen from obscurity to fame. He was one of the few characters in medieval Indian history who reached a high position without being a soldier. It is said that Balaji could ride a horse with difficulty and was not gifted with soldierly talent, but he was a good administrator and a statesman of outstanding ability. He was instrumental in winning important political elements in Maharashtra to Shahu's cause, such as the Purandares, the Bokils and other notable individuals and families. Being a skilled financier, he improved Shahu's finance and secured

for him financial support of many wealthy bankers of the day. By tact and diplomacy he succeeded in putting down the rebellious Chandra Sen Jadhav and Danaji Thorat and reducing the prestige of Shahu's rival, the Kolhapur branch of the Maratha ruling family. His outstanding diplomatic achievements were the conciliation of Tanaji Angre and the treaty of 1719 with the Mughul emperor which recognised the Maratha claim to *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* on the six subas of Dakhin. His ingenious method of realising *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* (that is, 35 percent of the revenue) calculated on the basis of Todar Mal's standard assessment, through his own collectors who were posted in the various parts of the Mughul Dakhin, served to ensure an expanding income to the Maratha state and to give it a convenient pretext for interfering in the affairs of its victims whose impoverished territories could not afford the exhorbitant payments. Balaji assigned parts of these collections to the Maratha chiefs which ensured each one's interest in increasing the state's revenue; but he wisely did not allow any of the chiefs to have his jurisdiction on a compact territory which could make him independent of the government. Sir Richard Temple's sketch of Balaji's character deserves to be quoted. "He was more like a typical Brahman," writes he, "than any of his successors. He had a calm, comprehensive and commanding intellect, an imaginative and aspiring disposition, an aptitude for ruling rude nature by moral force, a genius for diplomatic combinations and a mastery of finance. His political destiny propelled him into affairs wherein his misery must have been acute. More than once, he was threatened with death for which he doubtless prepared himself with all the stoicism of his race when a ransom opportunity arrived. He wrung by power of menace and argument from the Mughuls a recog-nition of Maratha sovereignty. He carried victoriously all his diplomatic points and sank into premature death with the con-sciousness that a Hindu empire had been created over the ruins of Muhammedan power and that of this empire the hereditary chiefship had been secured for his family." (*Oriental Experience*, pp. 389-90). He is rightly called the second founder of the Maratha empire.

Baji Rao, 1720-1740.

Shahu appointed Balaji Vishvanath's eldest son, Baji Rao, Peshwa on 27th April, 1720 in the teeth of opposition from his chiefs

and advisers. Baji Rao was then a mere boy, four months short of twenty, but possessed of a robust and hardy constitution, uncommon spirit, acute intelligence and practical commonsense. Besides being adept in horsemanship, he was well-versed in accounts and fully acquainted with the practical arts of administration and diplomacy. He correctly judged the rotten condition of the Mughul empire and formed a plan to wrest as many of its provinces as possible. He was, however, opposed by Shripat Rao Pratinidhi, who stigmatised the project as rash, and urged the reduction of Kolhapur and Karnatak. But Baji Rao's eloquence silenced opposition and won over Shahu. "Now is our time," said he, "to drive the strangers from the country of the Hindus, and acquire immortal renown. Let us strike at the trunk of the withering tree and the branches will fall off themselves. By directing our efforts to Hindustan, the Maratha flag shall fly from the Krishna to Attock." Shahu was impressed and approving of the new Peshwa's policy exclaimed, "You shall plant it beyond the Himalayas. You are, indeed, a noble son of a worthy father." The decision was made, and the Peshwa now turned against the Mughul empire.

Expedition to Malwa and Gujarat, 1724-1728.

In pursuance of the above policy Baji Rao crossed the Narmada in force in 1724 and over-ran Malwa. The Marathas had first entered that province as early as November 1699, but their early activity was in the nature of mere raids. Baji Rao desired a permanent foothold in Malwa, and the time was favourable for such a venture. The Rajput chiefs, especially Jai Singh of Jaipur, were in sympathy to the Maratha ideal of restoration of Hindu rule to the country and therefore friendly to Baji Rao. The Peshwa met with little opposition and returned to Poona after leaving his lieutenants Udaji Pawar, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Sindhia to collect the tribute. These became in course of time founders of the princely houses of Dhar, Indore and Gwalior. At this very time Marathas were endeavouring to establish their rule over Gujarat which had been first visited by them under Dhanaji Jadav as early as March 1706. The collection of dues from that province and Baglan was assigned to Khande Rao Dabhade, the Senapati. His lieutenant Damaji Gaikwar founded the ruling house of Baroda. Damaji's nephew Pilaji Gaikwar over-ran Gujarat and built a fortress at Songarh, 50 miles east of Surat.

Baji Rao and the Nizam, 1721-1728.

A very knotty problem for the new Peshwa was the adjustment of Maratha relations with the Nizam-ul-Mulk who held the six subas of the Dakhin and had after the fall of the Sayyid brothers emerged as the most powerful Mughul chief in the empire. Determined to convert his viceroyalty into a kingdom, he naturally looked upon the Marathas as his greatest enemies. He refused to implement the treaty of 1719 and sowed dissensions among them by declaring that of Shahu and Shambhaji of Kolhapur he would pay *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* to one who would establish himself as the unquestioned ruler of Maharashtra. Being aware of the crafty Nizam's intention, Baji Rao advocated open war, but the pacific Shahu advised the settlement of the dispute by peaceful means. Consequently, Baji Rao met the Nizam thrice—on 14th Janaury, 1721 at Chikhalthan, on 23rd February, 1723 at Bolasha, 25 miles south of Dohad, and on 28th May, 1724 at Nalchha near Dhar—and persuaded him to implement the treaty of 1719 and restore to Shahu the kingdom of Tanjore and the forts of Shivner, Chakan, Mahuli, Karnala, Pali and Miraj with the lands appertaining to them in addition. He made several other demands, but nothing came out of these diplomatic conferences. For about two years (1722-23) the Nizam was employed as wazir at Delhi and his viceroyalty was administered by his deputy Mubariz Khan. When he returned to the Dakhin after an unsuccessful term of wazirship (Feb. 1722—Dec. 1723) he had to fight with Mubariz Khan, and Baji Rao taking advantage of the situation captured the district of Burhanpur. The Nizam, however, defeated and killed Mubariz at Sakharkhedla on 10th October, 1724 and regained possession of his viceroyalty. Baji Rao remained neutral in this conflict, and after it was over, suggested to the Nizam to undertake a joint expedition to Karnatak.

During 1725 and 1726 two successive Maratha expeditions to Karnatak were undertaken by Baji Rao. Nizam-ul-Mulk not only did not join him, but sent his deputy Aiwaz Khan with a powerful army to Karnatak to act independently of the Peshwa. The Marathas proceeded to Chitaldurg and collected arrears of tribute. But Nizam-ul-Mulk who considered himself to be the legitimate master of the entire Dakhin and construed Baji Rao's expedition into Karnatak as an encroachment upon his own territory, took steps to

create trouble in Maharashtra during the Peshwa's absence in Karnatak. He tried to seduce Shahu's supporters and encouraged Shambhaji of Kolhapur to assert his claims to the whole of Maharashtra. Shambhaji on the advice of his minister Nilkanth Trimbak joined Nizam-ul-Mulk early in October 1726, and the two invaded Shahu's territory. Shahu was frightened and compelled to negotiate for a peaceful understanding with the Nizam. He was on the point of agreeing to the Nizam's offer of accepting cash payment of *Chauth* and withdrawing his agents posted in various parts of the Dakhin for realising it directly from the people, when Baji Rao returned from Karnatak. Now the Nizam even refused to make cash payments of *Chauth* and declared that he considered Shambhaji to be the rightful head of the Maratha state. Shahu was awakened to a sense of reality and approved of Baji Rao's proposal of a war with Nizam-ul-Mulk. The Peshwa entrapped the Nizam (6th March 1728) near Palkhed, about twenty miles west of Aurangabad, cut off his supplies and water and compelled him to sign a treaty (16th March) known as the treaty of Mungi-Sheogaon, recognising Shahu as the sole ruler of Maharashtra north of the Krishna. Its terms were: (1) The Nizam agreed to withdrew his protection from Shambhaji and to send him back to Panhala; (2) he agreed not to recognise Shambhaji's claim to collect *Chauth* from the districts north of the Krishna and to any other Jagir except that given to him by Shahu between the Krishna and the Panch-Ganga; (3) he promised to restore to the Marathas the territory captured by him and release Maratha prisoners; and (4) he bound himself to abide by the treaty of 1719 in respect of Shahu's claims to *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi*. This agreement of 16th March, 1728 is important, as by it the Nizam made a formal acknowledgment of the Maratha claims conceded by the treaty of 1719. Moreover, the Nizam's promise not to support Shambhaji led to the break up of the power of Shahu's rival. It enhanced the reputation of Baji Rao as a great strategist and diplomat.

The treaty of Mungi-Sheogaon did not reconcile the Nizam to the Marathas. He formed a plot with Trimbak Rao Dabhade, but the latter was slain by the Peshwa in April 1731. Next he allied himself with Muhammad Khan Bangash of Malwa and chased Baji Rao, but was again defeated. Baffled in war, the Nizam at last entered into a secret pact with Baji Rao by which the Peshwa promised to leave the Nizam's territory unmolested in return for *Chauth* and

Sardeshmukhi, while the crafty Nizam agreed to remain neutral during the Maratha invasion of Northern India. Thus, he diverted the Maratha ambition to the north in order to save his own territory from their attack.

Virtual conquest of Malwa and Bundelkhand, 1728.

Next, Baji Rao decided to invade the provinces of Bundelkhand and Malwa. In October 1728 he despatched his brother Chimnaji Appa against Malwa whose governor Girdhar Bahadur, an able and tried officer, exerted himself in defence of the province, but lost his life in a fierce battle at Amjhera near Dhar on 9th December. His cousin Daya Bahadur too fell on the same field. The Maratha hold on Malwa was now firmly established. About this very time, Baji Rao personally led an expedition into Bundelkhand at the invitation of the famous Bundela chief Chhatra Sal, then besieged at Jaitpur by Muhammad Khan Bangash, the Mughul governor of Allahabad of which Bundelkhand was then a part. Leaving Devgarh the Peshwa proceeded by rapid marches to Mahoba where he arrived on 22nd March. Chhatra Sal, who had been defeated and imprisoned by the Bangash, contrived to escape from the prison and met Baji Rao at Mahoba. The allies routed Muhammad Khan Bangash's son Qaim Khan near Jaitpur who was coming to re-inforce his father. Then they attacked Muhammad Khan himself and defeated him with great slaughter but allowed him to retreat to Farrukhabad after he had given a written undertaking that he would never again return to Bundelkhand and harass Chhatra Sal. Chhatra Sal held an open darbar and entrusted his two young sons, Hirde Shah and Jagat Raj, to Baji Rao's protection. He assigned a large part of his dominion to Baji Rao on the condition that the Peshwa would treat his sons as his younger brothers and accord them his protection and support. It was perhaps at this time that Chhatra Sal presented the beautiful Mastani to Baji Rao, who left Jaitpur for Poona early in June 1729. The territory assigned to Baji Rao consisted of Kalpi, Hata, Saugar, Jhansi, Sironj, Kunch, Garhkota and Hirde-nagar and was placed by him under the management of Govind Pant Kher who hereafter became known as Govind Pant Bundele. Raja Jai Singh of Jaipur who was the Mughul governor of Malwa, came to terms with the Peshwa and offered to have him appointed deputy governor of the province (1736) on the condition that he would refrain from raiding the Mughul territories. The emperor, however,

rejected the proposal. Nevertheless Malwa and Bundelkhand became from this time the virtual Maratha possessions.

Control over Gujarat; Fall of the Dabhades.

Baji Rao next decided to invade Gujarat and in February 1731 reached Ahmedabad and concluded a treaty with the new governor of that province, Maharaja Abhai Singh of Marwar. Meanwhile, the dispute between the Peshwa and Trimbak Rao Dabhade who was Shahu's commander-in-chief (Senapati), jealous of Baji Rao's ability and power and in league with the Nizam, came to ahead, and the parties met on the plain of Bhilapur, near Dabhoi, to settle it by an appeal to arms. The Senapati was defeated and killed and with his death the last of the powerful rivals of Baji Rao was removed, making him sovereign in all but name. Shahu appointed Trimbak Rao's younger brother Yaswant Rao his Senapati, but the family of Dabhades never recovered its prestige. The Dabhades lost their power in Gujarat which now passed into the hands of Pilaji Gaikwar. The latter was assassinated by Abhai Singh in 1738 and was succeeded by Damaji II.

Raid on Delhi, 1737; Nizam's last defeat.

In 1737 Baji Rao for the first time crossed the Yamuna, plundered the Doab and planned one of his boldest expeditions into Northern India. A contingent of his army under Malhar Rao Holkar was defeated by Saadat Khan, governor of Awadh, in March 1737, and the latter sent an exaggerated report of his success to Delhi in which he boasted that he had driven the Marathas across the Chambal. Baji Rao in order to prove the falsity of this report, made a rapid march, covered ten days' journey in two and swooped down upon Delhi in March of that year. The emperor was panic-stricken, but Baji Rao sent him a message that he had no other intention except that of showing to the emperor that he was alive, and falling back he defeated a Mughul army and returned to Gwalior. The Mughul emperor now felt that the only man who could save the empire from the Maratha onslaught was the Nizam and therefore he summoned him to Delhi. The Nizam accepted the offer and reached Delhi in July, and took the field in order to drive the Marathas across the Narmada. As usual Baji Rao was prepared to receive him. He besieged the Nizam at Bhopal in December 1737 and compelled him to sign a humiliating treaty known as that of Doraha Sarai (17th January, 1738) by which he

agreed to cede the whole of Malwa with the complete sovereignty of territory between the Narmada and the Chambal. He promised to get the treaty ratified by the emperor. Thus the Nizam instead of expelling the Marathas from Northern India became the cause of the crowning humiliation of the emperor as well as of himself.

Early in 1739 north-western India was invaded by Nadir Shah of Persia who defeated Muhammad Shah at Karnal and plundered Delhi. Baji Rao apprehending the invader's march into the Dakhin, prepared to sink all differences with the Mughuls in the defence of the country. But Nadir left Delhi. The Peshwa consequently had no reason to change his policy towards the empire.

Chimnaji captures Bassein, 1739.

The Peshwa next turned his attention to Konkan, the fertile strip of land between the Western Ghats and the sea, and sent his brother Chimnaji Appa to bring it under the Maratha control. In this region three rival powers, the Angrias of Kolaba, the Sidis of Janjira, and the Portuguese of Goa were contending for supremacy. Kanhoji Angre, in spite of his agreement with Shahu, defied the Peshwa's authority and levied *Chauth* on passing vessels. The Sidis were equally powerful and perpetual enemies of the Marathas. The Portuguese with their capital at Bassein were hostile to the Marathas on religious and political grounds. The Portuguese governor of Bassein insulted the Peshwa by calling him a "Nigger", and therefore Baji Rao despatched his brother Chimnaji to punish the haughty foreigner. Chimnaji captured Thana in April 1737, over-ran Salsette and reduced the fortress of that island. After the rainy season, he made an assault on Bassein which failed. He, therefore, besieged the island and dug mines to the very foundation of the walls of the fort, erected batteries near the town and began throwing large stones from mortars. After a prolonged and stubborn struggle, the Portuguese capitulated. Chimnaji Appa generously allowed the garrison to march out and gave them a safe conduct to Goa and Daman and allowed complete religious freedom to those who remained. The English at Cambay were terrified and made peace with the Marathas in July 1739. They were given the right of free trade in the Dakhin.

The Angria dissensions.

While Chimnaji was winning such a signal success against the Portuguese, the loyalty of the Angrias to the Maratha state received a rude shock. Kanhoji Angria had been succeeded by Sekhoji. Both these were able and loyal officers and had commanded the Maratha navy. After Sekhoji's death his two brothers Sambhaji and Manaji quarrelled among themselves on the question of succession. Baji Rao went to Kolaba and finding that the conflicting claims of the two brothers could not be peacefully reconciled, he divided the Angria estate into two, giving the larger portion extending from Suvarnadurg to Vijaidurg to Sambhaji with the title of Sarkher, and the northern portion to Manaji with his headquarters at Kolaba and the title of Wazarat-Maab. But the jealousy between the brothers continued. They quarrelled and fought with each other with the result that the English and the Portuguese tried to take advantage and weakened the Maratha navy. Sambhaji died on 22nd January, 1742. But the Angria trouble could not be solved.

Early in 1740 Baji Rao entrapped Nasir Jang, the second son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, near Aurangabad and compelled him to sign a treaty at Mungi-Sheogaon on 8th March, 1740. By it Nasir Jang ceded the districts of Handia and Khargon to the Marathas. This was Baji Rao's last achievement. He died suddenly at Ravar on the bank of the Narmada on 8th May, 1740 (28th April O.S.).

Character of Baji Rao.

Historians are unanimously of the opinion that Baji Rao stands next only to Shivaji in military and diplomatic genius. Though he was in his teens when called to the prime-ministership, he extended the Maratha dominions in all directions and overcame his enemies both at home and abroad. The result of his activities was that the political centre of gravity shifted from Delhi to Poona. Possessed of a commanding personality, Baji Rao was a great soldier and a great statesman. He was the foremost cavalry leader of his time and was adept in the guerilla tactics of the Maratha race. He was at the same time a generous friend and an eloquent and inspiring orator. He had the capacity of recognising merit in men and inspiring them to do great deeds. The historian Sir Richard Temple in summing up his character observes: "Baji Rao was hardly surpassed as a rider and was ever forward in action, eager to expose himself under fire if the affair was

arduous. He was inured to fatigue and prided himself in enduring the same hardship as his soldiers and shared their scanty fare. He was moved by ardour for success in national undertakings, by a patriotic confidence in the Hindu cause as against its old enemies Muhammedans and its new rival Europeans, then rising above the political horizon. He lived to see the Marathas spread terror over the Indian continent from the Arabian sea to the Bay of Bengal. He died as he had lived in camp under canvas among his men and he is remembered to this day among the Marathas as the fighting Peshwa, and an incarnation of Hindu energy." At his death he was a few months short of forty.

The Mastani episode.

Baji Rao's domestic happiness was marred by his love for a Muslim dancing girl named Mastani. She was probably presented to him by Chhatra Sal Bundela and was reputed to be the most charming lady of her time in India. She is said to have been the daughter of a Hindu by a Muhammedan mother. She was an exceedingly accomplished lady and captivated Baji Rao's heart so much that he became thoroughly devoted to her. She was a good musician and looked after Baji Rao's comforts with the devotion of a wife. A trained rider, she was capable of enduring exertion and fatigue like the Peshwa himself. Her name was first mentioned in Marathi papers in connection with the marriage ceremony of Baji Rao's eldest son, the future Balaji Bajirao, which took place on 21st January, 1730. Brahman priests refused to officiate at the proposed sacred thread ceremony of Raghunath Rao and marriage of Sadashiva Rao until Mastani was removed from Baji Rao's residence, the Shanivar palace in Poona at which a portion was assigned to Mastani and named after her. During Baji Rao's absence on a campaign she was kept in confinement by Balaji Rao and Chimnaji Appa. Baji Rao's dedication to meat and wine was ascribed to his association with Mastani. Perhaps it was proposed by the members of the Peshwa's family to put Mastani to death, and thus not to give any one cause of complaint against Baji Rao's unorthodox way of living. When Baji Rao heard of his love-lady's imprisonment, he was completely prostrated. But in fear of public opinion he did not think it politic to proceed to Poona and rescue her by force. He suddenly succumbed to the affliction. When the news reached Mastani, she died in the palace at Poona. It is difficult to say whether her end was caused by suicide or was due to shock.

Balaji Baji Rao, 1740-1761; Peshwa appointed Deputy-Governor of Malwa, 1741.

Shahu now appointed the deceased's eldest son Balaji *alias* Nana Sahib as Peshwa on 4th July, 1740. The new Peshwa was eighteen years and six months old. Babuji Nayak Joshi, a well-known banker, was also a candidate for the exalted office, but Shahu paid little attention to his request and conferred the robes on Balaji without hesitation. Balaji had received good training in war and diplomacy under his father; but he was not endowed with his father's dash and military genius. He was a man of sweet and conciliatory temper. On his appointment, he planned an expedition to Northern India in order to secure the formal cession of Malwa which had been promised to his father by Nizam-ul-Mulk. Accompanied by his uncle Chimnaji he left for Malwa, but Chimnaji had to return from the way on account of ill-health and died at Poona on 27th December, 1740. Though over-shadowed by Baji Rao's transcendent genius, Chimnaji was a notable soldier and an administrator of repute. Not a man of great personal ambition, he loyally served his brother and gave him the credit for his achievements. His son Sadashiv Rao popularly known as Bhau Sahib, was destined to rise to fame and to a tragic end. The Peshwa after due mourning for his deceased uncle resumed his journey and reached Dholpur, where he held a conference with Jai Singh of Jaipur in the last week of May 1741. It resulted in an agreement to the effect (1) that the Peshwa and Jai Singh should act in complete friendship and help each other; (2) that the Marathas should be strictly loyal to the emperor; and (3) that the governorship of Malwa should be secured for the Peshwa within six months. After this diplomatic success Balaji returned to Poona on 17th July. Jai Singh now persuaded the emperor to issue a 'farman' (14th July, 1741) appointing the crown prince Ahmad as Subedar of Malwa and Peshwa Balaji Rao as his deputy. Balaji Rao thus became the master of Malwa in name as well as in fact. The province had been in Maratha possession since November 1738. The formal grant of 14th July, 1741 legalised the Maratha conquest. The terms of the grant of Malwa were:—(1) The Marathas should not encroach on any other imperial territory; (2) The Peshwa should station at Delhi 500 Maratha horse for imperial service; (3) That at the time of necessity 4,000 more Maratha troops should be provided at the expense of the emperor; and (4) That the Peshwa should respect the jagirs in Malwa granted by the

emperor to individuals and religious institutions before 1741 and that he should not enhance the taxes on the ryots.

Conquest of Karnatak, 1740-41.

At the time of Baji Rao's death Raghuji Bhonsle of Berar was engaged in an expedition in Karnatak undertaken on the invitation of Raja Pratap Singh of Tanjore, a descendant of the great Shivaji's half-brother Vyankoji, whose independence was threatened by Dost Ali, Nawab of Karnatak. Raghuji defeated and killed Dost Ali and made peace with his son Safdar Ali. In December 1741, he besieged Chanda Sahib, Dost Ali's son-in-law, in Trichinapoly and sent him a prisoner to Satara. Trichinapoly was placed in the charge of Murar Rao Ghorpade. Raghuji now wanted to besiege Pondicherry, the stronghold of the French who were Chanda Sahib's allies; but he gave up the attempt and returned to Poona.

Raghuji Bhonsle acquires Orissa, 1751.

In order to silence his opposition to him, the Peshwa allowed Raghuji Bhonsle a free hand in Bangal, Bihar and Orissa which were practically independent under Ali Vardi Khan. Raghuji Bhonsle despatched a powerful army under his revenue minister Bhaskar Pant to enforce his demand of *Chauth* on the three provinces. Ali Vardi Khan invited Bhaskar Pant to an entertainment and treacherously massacred him along with his chief officers. But he had to pay heavily for his perfidy. Raghuji carried fire and sword into his territory and compelled him to surrender the province of Orissa with twelve lakhs of rupees annually as the *Chauth* for Bangal and Bihar (1751). The Marathas did not establish any civil administration in Orissa, but left it in the hands of the local chiefs. Raghuji's horsemen became a terror to the people of Bangal and Bihar.

Maratha interference with Jaipur; beginning of friction between Marathas and Rajputs.

Sawai Jai Singh of Amber, who acquired fame as the builder of a new capital at Jaipur and as a patron of learning, died on 3rd October, 1743 at the age of 55. His two sons Ishwari Singh, the elder and Madho Singh, the younger (born of an Udaipur princess) quarrelled for succession. But Maharana Jagat Singh of Udaipur supported Madho Singh's claim and the result was a war, which lasted for seven years. The Maharana marched on Jaipur and

demanded half of the State for Madho Singh. Ishwari Singh enlisted the support of Ranoji Sindhia and Malhar Rao Holkar and defeated Madho Singh in 1745. But as Ranoji died soon after and serious differences arose between his son Jayappa and Malhar Rao, the latter took up the cause of Madho Singh, while Sindhia remained on the side of Ishwari Singh. On 12th March, 1747, a severe battle was fought at Rajmahal near Deoli in which Madho Singh was defeated. The Maharana now sent an agent to Poona to enlist the Peshwa's support. The situation became so confusing on account of the rivalry of Sindhia and Holkar that the Peshwa himself proceeded to the north to settle the dispute. Ishwari Singh had just returned from a campaign against the Abdali invader of Kabul and as he was dissatisfied with the Marathas on account of their selfish conduct in his war with Madho Singh, he did not visit the Peshwa and remained sullenly aloof. But Madho Singh saw the Peshwa at Newai, nearly 40 miles south of Jaipur, and as the result of a conference it was decided that Ishwari Singh should hand over four of his districts to Madho Singh. On Peshwa's return in June 1748, Ishwari Singh refused to deliver the districts and Malhar Rao Holkar had to use force to compel him to abide by the agreement.

During the rainy season of 1750 the Peshwa sent Sindhia and Holkar to demand *Chauth* from Ishwari Singh. The Kachhwaha chief had little money in his treasury and consequently Malhar Rao Holkar marched on Jaipur with his troops. Ishwari Singh was compelled to promise one or two lakhs; but he was so exasperated by the Maratha demand that he swallowed poison and got himself bitten by a cobra and died. Three of his wives similarly swallowed poison and twenty burnt themselves on his funeral pyre. The city of Jaipur was filled with grief and consternation. Even Madho Singh was beside himself with rage at the Maratha conduct, and deciding to avenge the death of Ishwari Singh, he invited Jayappa and Malhar Rao for a dinner and served them with poisoned food. Before they had begun to eat it was discovered that the dishes served were contaminated with poison and therefore Sindhia and Holkar escaped death. The next day Jayappa along with his followers was invited to have a look at the city and as they entered, the gates were ordered to be closed. A general massacre of the Maratha commenced and lasted from mid-day to mid-night on 20th January, 1751. Nearly three thousand of them were killed and a thousand more wounded and

their property was plundered by the Rajputs. The remnants of the Marathas set up their camp a few miles from the city. Fortunately, the Sindhia and Holkar at this time received urgent appeal from the wazir Safdar Jang to assist him against the Pathans of Ruhelkhand and Farrukhabad, and therefore they left Jaipur for the Doab. But this episode brought about a gulf between the Marathas and the Rajputs.

Shahu's last days; His Character.

Shahu's last days were far from happy. His queens intrigued against each other. His own health began to fail and Tara Bai's move to secure power and the selfish rivalry between important Maratha chiefs, like Raghuji Bhonsle, Murar Rao Ghorpade and the Angria brothers, filled him with anxiety. A faction at the court, opposed to Peshwa Balaji Rao, thwarted his measures and made bitter complaints against him to the king. Matters went so far that the Peshwa had to submit his resignation in 1747; but he had proved himself indispensable and was, therefore, reappointed. To these difficulties were added the absence of an heir to the throne. Shahu had no son and he did not like to adopt Shambhaji of Kolhapur. Tara Bai who lived in confinement of Satara, produced a child who was supposed to be born of her son Shivaji and requested Shahu to adopt him. His name was Ram Raja. His adoption was, however, openly opposed by Shahu's queen Sakwari Bai. Shambhaji of Kolhapur attempted to seize the throne, but did not succeed. Under these circumstances, Shahu whose health was miserably failing died in his palace on 25th December, 1749. He was then 67 years and 7 months old. He left a will excluding Shambhaji of Kolhapur from succession and expressiong preference for Ram Raja.

Shahu was the last Maratha Chhatrapati who exercised *de facto* authority. After him the Maratha king became *roifaienant*, almost a prisoner in Satara and all powers passed into the hands of the Peshwa. "Personally Shahu was neither a clever politician nor a capable commander," writes the historian Sardesai, "but his innate commonsense and sympathetic heart enabled him to detect these qualities in others and utilise them for his service. He rightly judged men's capacities and gave them a free hand without grudge or hindrance. He particularly advanced the interest of the ryots,

brought barren tracks under cultivation, encouraged plantation of trees, relieved the sufferings of the poor, removed irksome taxes." (*A New History of the Marathas, Vol. II*, p. 277). The most important trait in Shahu's character was that once he had appointed his ministers, he gave them his confidence and support and seldom interfered with their work. This was the secret of his success as a ruler.

Shahu looked upon himself as a faithful vassal of the Mughul emperor and did not like any clash between Delhi and Satara. He was essentially a kind-hearted man. He freely mixed with people and took part in their social festivities. He had preference for the Muslim way of living. This was but natural, as he had been brought up in Aurangzeb's camp. He was fond of hunting, smoking '*huqqa*' and had a harem. He made no difference between Hindus and Musalmans and tolerated all religions. He is remembered for his generosity to this day.

After Shahu's death Ram Raja was crowned Chhatrapati on 14th January, 1750. Tara Bai kept him under strict control and stopped him from associating with the Peshwa. As Ram Raja revolted against Tara Bai's tutelage, she declared him an impostor. This led to a quarrel between the two. The Peshwa invited Tara Bai and her chief supporter Pant Sachiv to Poona. He treated Tara Bai with respect, but threw Pant Sachiv into the prison. The Chhatrapati Ram Raja was also requested to attend a conference at Poona and was persuaded to sign a document, known as the "Sangola Agreement" by which the Chhatrapati handed over all important offices of the state to the Peshwa's adherents. Henceforth, the Peshwa became the real ruler of the Maratha State.

Civil War in Maharashtra; Peshwa triumphs over his rivals.

After the "Sangola Agreement" the Peshwa resolving to settle the Maratha dispute with the Nizam of Hyderabad proceeded against the capital of that State. But as soon as his back was turned, Tara Bai hatched a conspiracy to overthrow the Peshwa's domination. As powers were swiftly passing from the hands of the Chhatrapati to those of his Brahman chief minister, the Maratha chiefs were feeling jealous of and alienated from the Peshwa. They resented the "Sangola Agreement" by which the Peshwa had managed to secure

chief offices of the state for his adherents, and were in a mood to join hands with Tara Bai who seized the fort of Satara, invited Ram Raja to a banquet and threw him into prison. She won over Uma Bai, the widow of Khande Rao Dabhade, who summoned her husband's old lieutenant Damaji Gaikwar from Gujarat to assist the old indomitable queen in seizing power. Damaji advanced upon Satara at the head of 15,000 troops. But the latter was opposed by Nana Purandhare and some other adherents of the Peshwa. Meanwhile, the Peshwa himself on receipt of Damaji Gaikwar's march upon Satara, returned from near Raichur by forced marches, and defeated Damaji, compelling him to surrender half of Gujarat and to pay him an indemnity of twenty-five lakhs of rupees. Not content with this the Peshwa, breaking his word attacked Damaji once again and took him a prisoner with his son and Uma Bai Dabhade. The breach between him and the Gaikwar became complete and Damaji never afterwards saluted the Peshwa except with his left hand. He resisted the Peshwa's demand as long as he could; but finding no way out, he submitted and was allowed to return to Gujarat where he expelled the old Mughul governor from Ahmedabad and became the virtual master of the province.

Damaji Gaikwar's defeat and submission failed to daunt Tara Bai who held out defiantly in the fort of Satara. She made peace with the Peshwa only after the latter had guaranteed her liberty under a solemn oath. As Tara Bai had declared Ram Raja an impostor, he remained in prison and died in obscurity in 1777. Before his death he had adopted a son named Shahu, the younger, who reigned until his death which occurred in 1810. Thus after the death of Shahu I in 1749 the Maratha kings had sunk into mere *rois-faineants* and the Peshwas had became *de facto* rulers of the Maratha State. For this both the Chhatrapati and the Peshwa were to blame. Shahu I had delegated his authority to his Peshwas who acted in the interest of the king and the state. Shahu's successors were utterly weak and did not know how to reconcile their *de jure* sovereignty with *de facto* power of their chief ministers. Tara Bai, who cared more for personal aggrandisement than the good of the state, aggravated the situation and became responsible for the Peshwa's usurpation of authority. The change proved ruinous, as it aggravated the centrifugal tendencies of the ruling class in Maharashtra.

Contest with the Nizam, 1751-1760.

The triumph over his domestic rivals enabled Balaji to undertake an expedition against Hyderabad at the end of 1751. He supported Ghazi-ud-din Khan, the eldest son of the late Nizam-ul-Mulk who had died in June 1748, against his younger brother Salabat Jang. The latter, however, brought into the field corps of trained infantry under the French general Bussy who defeated the Peshwa more than once and penetrated to within 16 miles of Poona. But the Hyderabad troops mutinied for want of pay and had to be recalled. Meanwhile the Peshwa's candidate Ghazi-ud-din Khan was poisoned in 1752 and the campaign then came to an end. Balaji next organised an expedition into Karnatak and brought huge plunder to Poona. He looted Mysore also. He made an alliance with the Nizam and attacked the Nawab of Savanur and compelled him to pay tribute.

In 1758 fresh hostilities broke out between the Nizam and the Peshwa. That year Bussy, the French general in the Nizam's service, was recalled by Lally and the Peshwa, therefore, thought that the time was opportune for dealing a blow at the Nizam, and attacked Hyderabad. He captured Ahmadnagar without striking a blow and induced Ibrahim Khan Gardi the commandant of the Nizam's artillery to enter his service. The Peshwa now despatched his cousin Sadashiv Rao Bhau, son of Chimnaji Appa, at the head of 40,000 troops to invade the Nizam's dominion. Salabat Jang, the Nizam, endeavoured to defend his territory, but was defeated in a battle at Udgir, 200 miles east of Poona, on February 3, 1760. In this battle Ibrahim Gardi's artillery played an important part. The Nizam fell back in disorder upon the fortress of Ausa which was promptly besieged by the Bhau. The Nizam was compelled to capitulate and a peace was made without loss of time. The Nizam surrendered his territory around Bijapur, and Aurangabad yielding an annual revenue of 60 lakhs of rupees, and delivered the fortresses of Daulatabad, Asirgarh, Bijapur, Ahmadnagar and Burhanpur to the victor. The Bhau's reputation as a great strategist was established beyond question.

Maratha intervention in the North; The Treaty of April 1752.

While Balaji was occupied in getting over internal dissensions in Maharashtra, events were moving rapidly in Northern India.

Towards the end of Muhammad Shah's reign the Panjab was invaded by Ahmad Shah Abdali who had set himself up as king of Afghanistan after the assassination of Nadir Shah in June 1747. But he was defeated at Manupur in March 1748. Muhammad Shah died meanwhile and was succeeded by his son Emperor Ahmad Shah who appointed Safdar Jang of Awadh as his wazir. The new wazir had serious differences with his neighbours, the Pathans of Farrukhabad and Ruhelkhand and consequently he undertook an invasion of the latter's territory. While he was engaged in uprooting the Pathan colony, Ahmad Shah Abdali again entered the Panjab during the winter of 1749 and compelled Muin-ul-Mulk, governor of that province, to pay him ten lakhs of rupees, besides promising the revenue of the four northern districts of the Panjab. Meanwhile the wazir was defeated by the Pathans in the Doab in September 1750. The Pathans over-ran the wazir's provinces of Awadh and Allahabad, plundered Lucknow and besieged the fort of Allahabad. Safdar Jang who was bitterly opposed by a court clique headed by the queen-mother Malke-i-Zamani and her favourite eunuch Javid Khan, found no way out of his difficulty except by seeking Maratha assistance. He engaged the services of Jayappa Sindhia and Malhar Rao Holkar, promising them Rs. 25,000 per day. He also sought the aid of Suraj Mal Jat of Bharatpur. With the help of these allies, the wazir defeated Ahmad Khan Bangash and compelled him to take shelter in the Kumaun hills. The Indian Pathans appealed to Ahmad Shah Abdali to come to their relief. The invader, therefore, again appeared in the Panjab towards the end of 1751. The emperor was terrified and sent frantic orders of recall to the wazir from his campaign in the Kumaun hills. The wazir made an agreement with Sindhia and Holkar and proceeded to Delhi to fight and drive out the invader. The agreement, dated 22nd April, 1752, contained the following terms:—

(1) That the Peshwa should defend the emperor from his internal and external enemies;

(2) That the emperor should pay 50 lakhs of rupees to the Marathas for their help, 30 lakhs on account of the Abdali and 20 lakhs on account of internal foes, like the Pathans;

(3) That the Peshwa should be given the right to levy *Chauth* from the Panjab, Sind and the Doab; and

(4) That the Peshwa was to be appointed governor of Agra and Ajmer.

This treaty was not ratified by the emperor who had already made peace with the Abdali invader and ceded to him the Panjab. Safdar Jang was thoroughly disgusted and as Sindhia and Holkar would not leave Delhi unless they were paid the promised sum of 50 lakhs, the wazir persuaded Ghazi-ud-din, the eldest son of the late Nizam-ul-Mulk, to proceed to the Dakhin to take charge of the viceroyalty of that province with Maratha assistance. The latter agreed to pay the Marathas 30 lakhs of rupees. The wazir thus succeeded in solving the Maratha tangle. But the opposition of the court party made it impossible for him to function. The result was a civil war between him and the emperor. Safdar Jang was defeated and was compelled to leave for his provinces of Awadh and Allahabad which were allowed to remain in his charge, though he was dismissed from the wazir post (November 1753).

Marathas besiege Kumbher; Rupture with the Jats, 1754.

The treaty of April 1752, though it was not ratified by the emperor, roused the Maratha ambition and provided them with a plausible excuse for capturing the provinces of Agra and Ajmer by force. Agra was coveted by Suraj Mal, the able Jat Raja of Bharatpur, while Ajmer was coveted by the Rathor king of Marwar. Another plausible excuse to the Marathas was provided by Imad-ul-Mulk's recent invitation to them to invade Bharatpur. This Mughul grandee was a grand-son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, and was appointed Mir Bakhshi. He was hostile to Suraj Mal for his alliance with Safdar Jang. The Peshwa had already despatched his brother Raghunath Rao, then eighteen years old, during the monsoon of 1753 to gain his first experience in the north. He reached Jaipur in December, from where he deputed Malhar Rao Holkar to besiege Kumbher, a strong fortress belonging to Suraj Mal. The Jat king tried to avoid war and sent a trusted agent to Raghunath Rao offering to pay 40 lakhs as the price of peace. Raghunath Rao haughtily rejected the offer and ordered the invasion of Kumbher. The siege lasted for four months (January-May 1754) in the course of which Malhar Rao's son Khande Rao Holkar was killed. The Jats put up such a brave resistance that the Marathas not only failed to capture the fortress but were also

obliged to accept a *mere* promise of 30 lakhs to be paid in three yearly instalments. Then he raised the siege.

During the Jat war Malhar Rao in company with Imad-ul-Mulk raided the emperor's camp near Sikandrabad and followed Mir Bakhshi to Delhi where the latter put emperor Ahmad Shah to death in June 1754 and raised Alamgir II to the throne. He got himself appointed as wazir. Raghunath Rao and Jayappa Sindhia soon reached Delhi and Imad-ul-Mulk promised them 82 lakhs for their support. For five months Raghunath Rao kept on roving in the vicinity of the capital in the vain hope of obtaining funds from the wazir and the new emperor. Next he crossed the Yamuna into Rajasthan for collecting tribute and was joined by Malhar Rao Holkar. At this time Jayappa Sindhia was conducting a campaign against Bijay Singh of Marwar for realising *Chauth* from him. Raghunath Rao wanted to join Jayappa but the latter advised him against it. Consequently, Raghunath Rao left for Gwalior and thence for Poona. His two years' expedition (Oct. 1753-Aug. 1755) not only failed in its objective but even injured the Maratha interest in the north.

Jayappa Sindhia in Marwar, 1755-1756; Another cause of Maratha-Rajput enmity.

While Malhar Rao Holkar interfered in the internal affairs of Jaipur and took sides in a war of succession to its throne which brought about a serious split between the Rajputs and the Marathas Jayappa Sindhia chose Marwar for his sphere of activity and by his arrogant conduct furnished another cause of a complete parting of ways between the chiefs of Rajasthan and the Marathas who had till 1741 worked together in a friendly spirit. Abhai Singh of Marwar died on 20th June, 1749. His son Ram Singh was set aside by Bakhat Singh, brother of Abhai Singh. Ram Singh sought the support of Jayappa Sindhia who besieged Bijay Singh, son of Bakhat Singh, (who had died in September 1752) in Ajmer. Bijay Singh fell back on Merta to which place he was followed by Jayappa. Eventually he took shelter in the fort of Nagaur where he was closely invested by Jayappa in October 1754. The siege lasted for about a year and caused a great deal of hardship to both the parties. Although in the meantime, Jayappa captured Ajmer (February 1755) and also many other places in Marwar, Bijay Singh tenaciously held on, but at the same time continued negotiations with the besiegers. On

25th July, 1755 while Jayappa had just finished his bath in the open space inside his camp and Bijay Singh's envoys were engaged in negotiations with his men, two beggars who were picking up gain, plunged their daggers at his side and wounded him mortally. These were supposed to have been Bijay Singh's agents and therefore the enraged Marathas cut the Rajput envoys and their party to pieces, and feeling ran very high between the parties. Jayappa's brother Dattaji continued the siege and in spite of Bijay Singh's frantic appeals to Madho Singh of Jaipur, to the Ruhela chiefs and even to the emperor to come to his assistance and drive away the Marathas from Northern India, the Sindhia chief succeeded in compelling Bijay Singh to pay an indemnity of 50 lakhs and to cede Ajmer and Jalor. Bijay Singh was also obliged to agree to surrender half of his dominion to his cousin Ram Singh. After thus avenging Jayappa, Dattaji raised the siege of Nagaur and while retaining possession of Ajmer, he gave away Jalor to Ram Singh and left for Poona.

Raghunath Rao's conquest of the Panjab, 1759-1760.

It has been pointed out that emperor Ahmad Shah had ceded in April 1752 the provinces of the Panjab and Multan to the Abdali invader who confirmed Muin-ul-Mulk in the viceroyalty of these provinces. In November 1753 Muin-ul-Mulk died and his widow Mughlani Begam was allowed to succeed him as *de facto* governor. This caused confusion in the administration of that province. Taking advantage of this, Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk appointed Adina Beg Khan as governor of the Panjab in February 1756 and had Mughlani Begam brought a prisoner to Delhi. As the unscrupulous wazir was starving the emperor and his household, Malka-i-Zamani and other Mughul ladies in consultation with Mughlani Begam and Najib-ud-daula, a consummate Ruhela politician, invited Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul to invade India and chastise the wazir and his Maratha allies who were the power behind Imad-ul-Mulk and responsible for much of the sufferings in Northern India. The Abdali defeated Adina Beg Khan, occupied the Panjab and then marched on Delhi (January 1757). He committed frightful atrocities on the inhabitants of the capital and sent his troops to attack Agra and Mathura and collect tribute from Suraj Mal Jat and other chiefs. The Afghans massacred the inhabitants of these regions and returned to join the Abdali, having been compelled by a pestillence and the heat of the Indian summer to retrace their steps as soon as possible.

The invader appointed Najib-ud-daula Chief Bakhshi and charged him with the duty of protecting emperor Alamgir II. He reinstated Imad-ul-Mulk as wazir, and laden with a rich booty estimated at twelve crores left for Kabul on October 1, 1757. Mughlani Begam who had been the invader's informant was patronised as long as he needed her services, but at the time of his departure the invader brushed her aside and made no provision for her livelihood. She died in utter disgrace and poverty in 1779.

During the Abdali's invasion Raghunath Rao, who had left Poona in October 1756, was on his way to Delhi. He and Malhar Rao wasted their time in useless wrangles in Rajputana, while the Abdali's troops were slaughtering defenceless pilgrims at Mathura. They reached Agra after the invader had left the place and were welcomed by Imad-ul-Mulk. Najib-ud-daula fearing Maratha vengeance threw himself on the protection of Malhar Rao Holkar. The Marathas quickly proceeded to Delhi and captured it with all the territory in the Doab upto Saharanpur (August 1757). Najib-ud-daula was outmanoeuvred and made a captive by Vithal Shivdev. It was completely in the power of Raghunath Rao to make this Ruhela chief, who was their most implacable enemy, a lifelong captive in a distant fortress in the Dakhin. But on account of the vaccilating character of Raghunath Rao and the conflicting views and policies of the Sindhia and the Holkar, Najib-ud-daula escaped the retribution that he justly deserved. Malhar Rao accepted huge bribes from him and secured his release pleading that it was wise to utilise Najib's services in strengthening the Maratha hold over Northern India. The colourless Raghunath Rao accepted the advice. The Marathas now reinstalled Alamgir II on the throne of Delhi, confirmed Imad-ul-Mulk as wazir and appointed Ahmad Shah Bangash Mir Bakhshi. After this Raghunath Rao proceeded to Lahore capturing Kunjpura and Sarhind on the way. In co-operation with Adina Beg Khan he took steps to drive away the Abdali's son Taimur and his general Jahan Khan who had been left by the Shah in 1757 in charge of the Panjab. When this task was accomplished, Raghunath Rao posted Abdus Samad Khan (the defeated commandant of Sarhind) and Abdur Rahman at Sarhind with a large force and instructions to recover Kabul and Kandhar from the Abdali. Leaving at Lahore a strong garrison of Maratha troops under Tukoji Holkar and Sabaji Sindhia, Raghunath Rao left for Poona in May 1758. After his

departure Tukoji and Sabaji proceeded to the frontier, occupied Attock and made arrangements for the collection of revenue of the country upto the Indus. Adina Beg was placed in charge of the Panjab for an annual revenue of 75 lakhs. But he died on 19th September, 1758. This upset the Maratha administration in the Panjab.

Dattaji Sindhia besieges Najib at Shukar-Tal.

Raghunath Rao's provisional administration of the Panjab was a temporary expedient and it was left to Dattaji Sindhia to make a permanent arrangement for the defence of that frontier province. The main flaw in Raghunath's administration was the fact that the Panjab had been left in the hands of two Muslim chiefs, Abdus Samad Khan and Abdur Rahman (who could not be expected to be loyal to the Maratha cause), without the association of a Maratha leader of towering personality. Dattaji had left Poona in May 1758, met the returning Raghunath Rao near Ujjain in June and arrived at Delhi in December. He proceeded to Lahore and appointed Sabaji Sindhia governor of the Panjab upto the Indus (February 1759). He then returned to the Doab (June) and held a conference with Najib-ud-daula for the settlement of the administration of that region. Najib, however, left the Maratha camp in a huff, declaring that his life was in danger. But he continued negotiations through his agents and took up his position at Shukar-Tal on the western bank of the Ganga, sixteen miles east of Muzaffarnagar. When the country became flooded on account of rains, he took steps to entrap Dattaji and sent urgent appeals to his Ruhela kinsmen Hafiz Rahmat Khan and other Pathans, to Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh and to Ahmad Shah Abdali of Kabul to come to his assistance with all possible speed. Dattaji, therefore, began counter-measures and made a sudden attack on Najib's camp on 15th September; but it failed, and fighting continued. Dattaji despatched Govind Pant Bundele (21st October) beyond the Ganga to cut off Najib's supplies and prevent the Ruhelas from joining him. But Govind Pant was defeated by Hafiz Rahmat and Dunde Khan. Meanwhile the advance guard of Shuja-ud-daula's army under Anupgiri Gosain crossed the river by a bridge and joined Najib at Shukar-Tal at the end of October. Dattaji thereupon earnestly besieged Najib's camp.

While Dattaji was lying before Shukar-Tal, Ahmad Shah Abdali, in response to Najib's appeal, sent an army under Jahan Khan to

occupy the Panjab. But Jahan Khan was defeated and wounded by Sabaji, and had to retreat to Peshawar in discomfiture. This roused the Abdali king who invaded the Panjab and defeated Sabaji. The slender Maratha army suffered greatly and Sabaji in extreme consternation fled to Shukar-Tal where he arrived on 8th November. The Panjab was lost to the Marathas.

Abdali invades India ; Defeat and death of Dattaji.

Undaunted by the turn of events Dattaji continued the siege of Shukar-Tal with vigour. Wazir Imad-ul-Mulk was, however, unnerved at Delhi and fearing that the emperor would go over to join the invader, had him murdered on 29th November, 1759, and himself a little later proceeded to Bharatpur to take shelter with Suraj Mal Jat. By this time the invader had reached Sarhind, and when he heard of Alamgir II's murder, he proceeded to Delhi to punish the wazir and his Maratha allies. Dattaji was now obliged to raise the siege of Shukar-Tal (11th December, 1759) and turn towards Delhi to oppose the Abdali. He crossed the Yamuna on 18th December and boldly occupied Kunjpura where he learnt that 40,000 Afghans under Taimur had already reached Ambala. Dattaji now sent to Delhi a part of his army with heavy artillery and baggage under Govind Pant Bundele, while with his remaining 25,000 troops he moved to face the enemy. But the Abdali avoiding an open encounter crossed the Yamuna and encamped at Bararighat near Luni, ten miles north of Delhi. Here a terrible battle took place (10th January, 1760) in which Dattaji fell by a chance bullet and Jankoji Sindhia was wounded. Dattaji's death caused a panic in his army and his troops fled. The invader immediately took possession of Delhi and appointed Yaqub Khan its governor. He sent his agents to Rajput chiefs, Suraj Mal Jat and Shuja-ud-daula demanding tribute; but all sent evasive replies except the Jat Raja who sent a bold message, "You must first drive the Marathas away from Delhi," said he, "assure us that you are the master there, and then we shall be your willing vassals." The Abdali was not prepared to proceed further, but he was beseeched by Najib-ud-daula to stay on, and crush the Marathas lest they should return and wreak their vengeance on him and other Musalmans.

Bhau Sahib marches to Delhi.

The news of Dattaji's death reached the Peshwa at Ahmadnagar on 13th February, 1760. He decided to despatch his cousin

Sadashiv Rao Bhau to Delhi to avenge the wrong and drive away the Abdali invader from the country. The Bhau had requisite ability and experience for the task and he was as well equipped with troops and materials as was possible under the circumstances. Ibrahim Khan Gardi with his efficient park of artillery was placed under the Bhau's command. He started from Patdur on 14th March at the head of two lakhs of men, about 33,000 of whom were servants, clerks, shopkeepers and camp followers, and reached Gwalior on 4th June. His plan was to cross the Yamuna and attack the Ruhelas who were the invader's allies. Accordingly he instructed Govind Pant Bundele to keep ready a large number of boats for that purpose. But the scheme failed owing to early rain and flood. The Marathas were detained for a long time beyond the Chambal and could not reach the vicinity of Yamuna in time. The Bhau was joined by Malhar Rao Holkar and Jankoji Sindhia near Agra. He reached Mathura on 16th July and was met by Suraj Mal Jat who offered to join the Marathas with 10,000 troops and to give shelter to their ladies and non-combatants provided that the Bhau did not demand *Chauth* from him and did no damage to the crops and property of his subjects. The Bhau accepted the offer. As the Yamuna was in flood it was decided to proceed to Delhi and wrest the capital from the Abdali's agents. This was easily done. The Bhau entered the capital on 22nd August, 1760.

Even before he crossed the Chambal, the Bhau had written letters to the chief of Rajasthan, to Shuja-ud-daula of Awadh and to other notables to make a common cause with him in driving out the foreign invader beyond the Indus. But the Maratha diplomacy did not succeed. The Rajputs had been antagonised by the high-handed conduct of Sindhia and Holkar and remained aloof. Shuja-ud-daula who looked upon his Ruhela neighbours of the Doab as his greater enemies than the Marathas almost agreed to join the Bhau. When this became known to the Abdali, he deputed Najib-ud-daula to go to Lucknow personally and bring round Shuja-ud-daula. Najib met the Nawab Wazir at Mehdighat and persuaded him in the name of their common religion and interests to join the Shah. He promised him wazirship of the empire as the Bhau had done. Shuja-ud-daula could not resist Najib's importunity and was cordially received by the invader in his camp at Anupshahar on 18th July. Shuja-ud-daula's alliance with the Abdali was a great blow to the

Maratha cause. Yet another blow was the breaking away of Suraj Mal Jat and his return from Delhi to Bharatpur. The cause of the sudden breach between the Bhau and the Jat raja is variously stated. It is said that Suraj Mal's advice to leave the Maratha baggage, artillery and women at Bharatpur and start guerrilla operations against the Abdali after the traditional Maratha fashion and cut off his supplies, was rejected by the Bhau, who preferred an open pitched battle. The Bhau's stripping off the silver ceiling of the Diwan-i-Am in the Delhi fort in order to pay his troops also offended Suraj Mal. The historian Sardesai, however, observes that Suraj Mal had never agreed to serve the Marathas beyond his own territory and demanded that he should be put in charge of Delhi. But as this could not be done, he left for Bharatpur. "All other alleged reasons", writes he, "are, on historical scrutiny, untenable and false." But it may be questioned as to why Suraj Mal accompanied the Bhau with his troops to Delhi, if he had "never agreed to serve the Maratha cause beyond his jurisdiction." The cause of rupture, therefore, seems to have been a more serious one,—the question of policy to be followed vis-a-vis the emperor and against the Abdali.

From August to October the Bhau with his men numbering over one lakh remained encamped at Delhi and consumed the food supplies of the capital and its neighbourhood. Within a short time he began to suffer for want of provisions, money and fodder. The Peshwa sent no funds from Poona. The Maratha army, therefore, began losing its morale. All this time negotiations for a peaceful settlement of the dispute were on foot. The Abdali who was equally hard-pressed for funds and provisions, was not unwilling to an honourable peace; but they fell through, as Najib-ud-daula was not prepared for a settlement until the Marathas had been driven beyond the line of the Chambal. He circulated a false rumour that the Bhau had crowned Vishvas Rao as emperor, issued coins in his name and was anxious to establish Maratha sovereignty over the whole country. Probably the Abdali and other Musalmans were deceived by this propaganda and therefore prepared themselves to fight the Marathas to the bitter end.

The Rival Armies at Panipat

On 7th October 1760 the Bhau left Delhi to capture Kunjpura so as to drive the Abdali to the north and relieve pressure on Delhi, instruct-

ing Govind Pant Bundele to cross into the Doab and devastate Ruhelkhand. He captured Kunjpura on 17th and took Najabat Khan, its commandant, prisoner. The latter died of his wounds, while his important colleagues were put to death. The provisions and money acquired at Kunjpura relieved the Maratha distress for some time. The news of the fall of Kunjpura came like a shock to the Abdali invader who decided for an immediate attack and crossed the Yamuna at Bhaghpat about 20 miles north of Delhi (25th October). Proceeding along the right bank of the river, he arrived at Sonipat. When the Bhau received news of this great feat on the part of the invader, he turned back from the north and arrived at Panipat within five miles of the Abdali's advance troops. About the end of October the two armies sighted each other and had slight skirmishes. As the Bhau found the enemy prepared for a combat, he gave up his original plan of a surprise attack and on the advice of Ibrahim Gardi entrenched himself on the plain to the south of the town of Panipat with a view to remain on the defensive and not to attack the Abdali invader until he had been weakened by starvation. He was encumbered with a large number of non-combatants, including women, and therefore ruled out a hold attack for cutting through the enemy's ranks as an obvious impossibility. The Maratha camp extended for six miles from east to west and was two miles deep north to south. A large trench, about 25 yards broad and six yards deep surrounded it and was further protected by an earthen wall upon which heavy artillery was arranged. The Abdali's camp lay about three miles south with the village of Sonipat at his back. It was also fortified with trenches and *abatis* of felled trees. The Bhau was in high spirits for several days after his arrival at Panipat, instructed Govind Pant Bundele to raid Ruhelkhand and send him provisions and funds. But the position was reversed when the Abdali moved his camp quite close to the bank of the Yamuna which assured him a plentiful supply of water and easy communication with the Doab which being in Najib's possession sent him regular supplies of grain and fodder. Moreover, the Abdali posted strong guards all round the Maratha camp and cut off the Maratha supplies and communications with the Doab, Delhi and Rajputana. The country in the north was yet open to the Marathas, but as the Abdali recaptured Kunjpura soon after, the Maratha communications with the Punjab too were stopped. On account of this development, there was a considerable suffering in the Maratha camp. No supplies could reach the Bhau from any quarter and for two months no news from Panipat reached the Dakhin.

In spite of great distress the Bhau did not lose courage and from 1st November 1760 to 14th January 1761 fought several skirmishes with the enemy, which, however, did not produce any decisive result. On 19th November Ibrahim Gardi's brother Fateh Khan made a surprise night raid on the Abdali's camp, but was repulsed. On 22nd November Jankoji Sindia attacked the Abdali's wazir and pursued him right upto his camp, but had to return for want of proper support from the Peshwa's troops. On 7th December Najib attacked a party of the Marathas in which more than 300 Ruhelas were killed. On 17th December Najib's Ruhelas surprised Govind Pant Bundele who was collecting provisions at Jalalabad, ten miles south-west of Ghaziabad, and put him to death. The Maratha army was now in the grip of starvation. The Bhau established mints in the camp and melted down gold and silver ornaments into coins for purchasing grain, the price of which had run very high, but even this did not suffice for more than two weeks. Driven to desperation the Bhau made his last attempt to negotiate peace with the Abdali, offering him a heavy war indemnity, but the proposal was rejected on the advice of Najib.

The Battle of Panipat; 14th January, 1761.

The Bhau was now anxious to have a final combat with the enemy as soon as possible, but the Abdali was not in a hurry to provoke the Marathas and asked his impatient allies to leave the military operation to him, but not to bother him with politics. The Marathas had no food to eat and their chiefs approached the Bhau to fight without delay. "It is now two days since we have had anything to eat," they said. "Do not let us perish in this misery, let us make one spirited attack against the enemy and whatever is our destiny that will happen." The Bhau decided for a final battle. On the advice of Ibrahim Gardi "the whole force was to move slowly on in a square formation, all the four sides of which were to be protected by heavy artillery. The ladies and noncombatants were to be put in the centre and the whole mass was to move in a block under the protection of Ibrahim Khan's canon." In this formation the Maratha troops moved out for attack early in the morning of 14th January. The Bhau made one final attempt to avoid the conflict and sent a note to Kashiraj, a Maratha officer in the service of Shuja-ud-daula saying, "The cup is full to the brim; not a drop more can it contain. Please let me have a final reply on the adjustment of the dispute." On the 14th morning the note was delivered to the Shah who wanted a day to think over the

matter. It was now too late, for the Maratha army was already in the field.

The Maratha army, 45,000 strong with a large number of non-combatants in the centre, advanced slowly; but their original plan of mass movement could not be carried out. The Bhau, therefore, re-formed his troops in a long line, taking his stand in the centre along with Vishvas Rao, both riding on magnificent war elephants with the Bhagwa Jhanda in their front. To his left was stationed Ibrahim Gardi with his regular battalions, and Damaji Gaikwar on his immediate right. On the Bhau's right Malhar Rao Holkar and Jankoji Sindia took their stand. The Bhau did not keep any part of his troops in reserve. The Marathas made a desperate attack attempting to rush through the enemy ranks which consisted of 60,000 combatants, half of whom were foreigners, and almost all were cavalry men with a small number of foot soldiers. The enemy centre was commanded by the Abdali's wazir Shah Wali Khan who had the select Durrani cavalry under his charge. Shah Parsand Khan and Najib-ud-daula were posted on the left flank, facing Jankoji Sindia and Malhar Rao Holkar. Shuja-ud-daula was stationed between the Abdali wazir and Najib-ud-daula. On the right flank were Barkhurdar Khan and Amir Beg at the head of Ruhela and Mughul contingents. The Abdali himself took his stand at the back of his centre near a picked reserve so as to keep his eye on the development of the action in the various parts of the field.

The Maratha attack began at about 9 in the morning with a fierce discharge of artillery and rockets from Ibrahim Gardi's heavy guns. Gardi's first attack was made on Hafiz Rahmat Khan, Dunde Khan and Ahmad Khan Bangash. The Ruhelas fought bravely, but Ibrahim's guns slew and wounded 8 to 9 thousand of them and pressed them back. The Gardi-Ruhela duel lasted for three hours after which, in the confused hand-to-hand fighting with the help of the fresh Afghan troops sent by the Abdali, the Gardi battalions were almost annihilated. While this contest was going on, the Abdali's centre under his wazir was attacked by the Bhau with the whole of the Maratha house-hold cavalry. In spite of the Afghan resistance, the Marathas broke through three of their lines. Shah Wali Khan was bewildered. He dismounted his horse and made a vain attempt to rally his men saying, "Our country is far off, my friends, whither do you fly ?" But none listened to him. It seemed, therefore, that the battle was going against the

Abdali whose right flank was turned, centre was broken and only the left was holding its own. The desperate resistance of Najib-ud-daula to the Maratha charge ultimately saved the situation. The Ruhela contingent that faced Jankoji Sindia and Malhar Rao Holkar was much superior in number to that of the Marathas, but there being a secret understanding between Najib and Malhar Rao the latter fled from the field, leaving Jankoji to his fate. At this time, the Abdali threw in his fresh reserves and sent round his military police to force the stragglers, who were running away to the rear, to proceed to the front. He posted 4,000 men to cover his right and despatched 10,000 troops to reinforce his wazir Shah Wali Khan with instructions to charge with sword in hand. At the same time, he ordered Shah Parsand Khan and Najib-ud-daula to take the Maratha centre in flank. The Afghan swivel guns mounted on camels were now ordered to fire. The enemy camels galloped along the line and began firing swivels from their saddles into the closed ranks of the Marathas. The simultaneous counter-attacks by fresh troops launched all along the lines at a time when the Marathas were tired and hungry, brought about their collapse. Still they contested the ground, inch by inch, and for full two hours there was such a deadly struggle that nothing could be seen or heard except the clash and rattle of weapons and battle cries of the rival armies. At about 2-15 p.m. a chance bullet struck Vishvas Rao and killed him. The Bhau now desperately threw himself on the enemy, fought for an hour longer and was killed in the confusion. At this, all of a sudden, the Maratha resistance collapsed. "All at once" writes Kashiraj, "as if by enchantment the whole Maratha army turned their backs and fled at full speed, leaving the field of battle covered with heaps of dead." The Afghans pursued them to their camp and gave them no quarter. They mercilessly slew all the stragglers that they could find. The slaughter went on during the night also and through the next day. The entire Maratha camp was plundered and women and children were converted into slaves.

When the sun rose on the 15th January the magnitude of the Maratha losses was revealed to the world. "The field of battle looked like a tract sown with tulips, and as far as the sight could extend, nothing could be discovered but bodies stretched at the foot of bodies, as if they had been asleep or marshalled by art" (Siyar). Thirty-two heaps of the slain were counted each with 5,000 to 1,000 dead bodies, the total reaching 28,000. Almost an equal number of dead bodies

was found lying in the ditches and around the camp. Nearly 9,000 who had concealed themselves in the town of Panipat were slaughtered in cold blood. Kashiraj who was himself a Maratha and an eye witness describes the fanatical fury of the Abdali Afghans in these words:—"Every Durrani soldier brought hundred or two of prisoners and slew them in the outskirts of their camps, crying out, 'When I started from our country, my mother, father, sister and wife told me to slay as many '*Kafirs*' for their sakes, after we had gained the victory in this holy war, so that the religious merit of this act (of infidel-slaying) might accrue to them.' In this way, thousands of soldiers and other prisoners were massacred. In the Shah's camp, except the quarters of himself and his nobles, every tent had a heap of severed heads before it. One may say that it was verily dooms-day for the Maratha people." Among the notables that fell on the field were Vishvas Rao, the eldest son of the Peshwa, the Bhau himself, Jaswant Rao Pawar, Tukoji Sindia and a few others. Jankoji Sindia was severely wounded and later put to death. Ibrahim Gardi was taken prisoner and also put to death. Malhar Rao Holkar had fled from the field leaving Jankoji Sindia to his fate, and he safely reached Poona. Mahadji Sindia, though wounded and lamed for life, saved himself by flight. Antaji Mankeshwar was killed by the Baluchis of Farraukhnagar. In short, the Maratha causalties were estimated at 75,000. "There was not a home in Maharashtra that had not to mourn the loss of a member, and several houses their very heads, and entire generation of leaders was cut off at one stroke." (*Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Sarkar, Vol. II, p. 257). About 25,000 Marathas escaped and saved their lives. These included 8,000 who had taken shelter in the camp of Shuja-ud-daula who generously offered them protection and had them escorted to Suraj Mal Jat's territory, financing the journey from his own pocket. Suraj Mal, forgetting the wrongs done to him by the Holkar and Sindia, did his utmost to provide shelter, food, clothes and medical aid to countless Maratha refugees.

Results of the Maratha defeat.

Historians hold opposite views about the consequences of the Maratha defeat at Panipat. Modern Maratha writers are almost unanimous in their opinion that the only great disaster suffered by them was the loss of 75,000 of their people, but it did no great injury to their cause. "Notwithstanding the terrible losses in man power suffered on that field by the Marathas", writes the historian Sardesai,

"the disaster decided nothing. In fact, it pushed forward in the distant sequel two prominent members of the dominant race, Nana Phadnis and Mahadji Sindia, both miraculously escaping death on that fatal day, who resuscitated that power to its former glory........ The disaster of Panipat was indeed like a natural visitation destroying life, but leading to no decisive political consequences. To maintain that the disaster of Panipat put an end to the dreams of supremacy cherished by the Marathas, is to misunderstand the situation as recorded in contemporary documents." (*New History of Marathas*, Vol. II, p. 454). The other view is held by the great historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar who says that "a dispassionate survey of Indian history will show how unfounded this (Maratha) chauvinistic claim is. A Maratha army did, no doubt, restore the exiled Mughul emperor to the capital of his fathers in 1772, but they came then not as king makers, not as the dominators of the Mughul empire and the real masters of his nominal ministers and generals. That proud position was secured by Mahadji Sindia only in 1789 and by the British in 1803." (*Fall of the Mughul Empire*, Vol. II, p. 260). The latter view is reasonable and correct. In the first place, the battle proved to be absolutely decisive. The Maratha army with its leaders was completely wrecked and out of over one lakh of persons only a few thousands reached Maharashtra and that too in great misery of body and mind, to tell the tale of their national disaster. So great was the collapse of the military power of the Marathas that for about three months the Peshwa could not get the authentic details about the casualties and the fate of the Bhau and some of the other leaders. Secondly, although after his victory; the Abdali did not make India his home, yet the Muslim supremacy over north-western India consisting of the provinces of the Panjab, Multan and Delhi the fate of which hung in the balance during 1754-60, remained an accomplished fact and the Marathas hereafter made no attempt whatever to recover the Panjab and to guard the frontier. In short, the Maratha dream for the establishment of their domination over the entire country was gone for good as the consequence of their defeat at Panipat. The Abdali's desire for a peace with the Peshwa which was concluded in February 1763, did not, in any way, whittle down the verdict of 1761 and did not question the Pathan domination over north-western India including Delhi. Thirdly, the moral effect of the Maratha defeat was even greater. The Maratha legions which were hitherto looked upon as invincible lost their reputation, military as well as

political. The Indian world after 1761 no longer thought that the Maratha friendship was worth having, "because the Marathas had clearly demonstrated in the last four years that they could not protect their dependents any more than they had been able to protect their own-selves." Fourthly, as Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes, this battle by removing nearly all the great Maratha captains and statesmen including the Peshwa Balaji Rao, "left the path absolutely open and easy to the guilty ambition of Raghunath Dada, the most infamous character in Maratha histroy. Other losses time could have made good, but this was the greatest mischief done by the debacle at Panipat." In short, the internal dissensions in the Peshwa family that brought about the downfall of the Marathas owe their origin to the circumstances created by the Maratha defeat at Panipat. Fifthly, the crushing defeat of the Marathas and the consequent destruction of their political aspirations freed the British merchants in India "from the thraldom of insidious neighbours and hastened their rise." The path of the British supremacy in India was now left open. "It is significant," writes the historian Sardesai, "that while the two combatants, the Marathas and the Musalmans, were locked in deadly combat on the field of ancient Kurukshetra, Clive, the first founder of the British Empire in India, was on his way to England to explain the feasibility of his dreams of an Indian Empire to the Great Commoner, Lord Chatham, then the prime-minister. Panipat indirectly ushered in a new participant in the struggle for Indian supremacy. This is indeed the direct outcome of that historical event, which on that account marks a turning point in the history of India." (*New History of the Marathas*, Vol. II, p. 455). On the next day of the battle of Panipat the Mughul emperor, Shah Alam II, was defeated by the British under Carnac, and had to throw himself on British protection. On 16th February 1761 the British captured Pondicherry and smashed the French power in India. The political start of the English East India Company was now on the ascendant.

Causes of Maratha Defeat.

The Maratha defeat at Panipat was due to many important causes. Firstly, the Abdali's army was larger in number and more effective in fighting strength than that of the Bhau. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has estimated on the basis of contemporary records the Abdali army at 60,000 while the Maratha combatants did not exceed 45,000. Secondly, the Afghans commanded supplies from the Doab and the

Delhi region and had, therefore, more than adequate provisions for themselves, their horses and other beasts of burden. The Marathas, on the other hand, suffered starvation for two months and had to fight on bare stomachs. Such a famished army was not likely to succeed against a well-provided and satisfied enemy. Thirdly, Ahmad Shah Abdali's force was well-trained and disciplined and the Shah invariably enforced complete order in the camp and the battlefield and ridigly punished every kind of indiscipline and disobedience. Many instances of the Shah's rigorous enforcement of discipline are on record; one of which may be referred here to illustrate the point. Kashiraj writes that some Abdali troops had committed irregularities in Shuja-ud-daula's camp in 1760. "The Shah, hearing of this, had 200 of them seized, and having had their noses bored through with arrows, and a string passed through the holes, they were led in this condition like camels, to Shuja ....to be put to death or pardoned, as he should think proper." On the other hand, the Maratha troops and officers were individualistics and refractory and "hated discipline with the hatred of 'lesser breeds without the law' who extol lawless caprice as liberty and howl against the disciplined self-control and organised team-work of a true army or school as the mark of a 'slave mentality' and the destroyer of their *elan vital.*" It is the organised discipline that wins and not mere physical force. It is no wonder that the ill-disciplined Maratha troops lost the day against the well-organised and well-disciplined enemy. Fourthly, although the Bhau had a good park of artillery under an able commander, Ibrahim Gardi, his army as a whole was out-classed in weapons and other equipments. The Abdali possessed many hundreds of long swivel guns which were fired from the backs of the moving camels. Whereas the Gardi's artillery became ineffective in a hand to hand fighting, the swivel guns continued plying from all directions. The Abdali's troops were armed with muskets as against the Maratha troops' lance and sword. Fifthly, although the Bhau was a fearless soldier he was eclipsed in generalship by his adversary Ahmed Shah Abdali who was the ablest Asiatic general of his time. His towering personality as a born leader of men and his genius for war and diplomacy constituted a very material cause of his success. The Bhau, instead of supervising the combatants and keeping touch with all the divisions of his troops, rushed head-long into the fight and after the death of Vishvash Rao plunged himself into the jaws of death like a common soldier. Sixthly, the Bhau failed to keep his lines of communications intact with Delhi where he had foolishly left

only a few thousands of men to hold the imperial city and allowed himself to be entrapped by the enemy. While the Shah maintained full contact with the friendly Ruhela country in the Doab, the Maratha army was completely isolated and besieged many hundreds of miles away from their territory. Above all, by their wanton aggression and grasping interference with the people of northern India including the Rajput chiefs and the Jat Raja for more than ten years, the Marathas had alienated the sympathies of the Hindus and Musalmans alike. The people in northern India did not, therefore, raise their little finger to help the Bhau in his distress. In as much as popular sympathy and support constitute a second line of defence, the Maratha disaster at Panipat must be ascribed to the people's antipathy as well.

Death of Balaji Baji Rao; His Personality and Character.

As the Peshwa had not received any news from Panipat for over two months and was unaware of the fate of his army, he planned to march to northern India. His health had been visibly failing for some time and an attempt was made to divert him from his many anxieties by providing music and dance and importing slave girls from northern India. The Peshwa was even induced to marry a young wife on 27th December, 1760 at Paithan. In this condition he proceeded to northern India and arrived at Bhilsa on 24th January where he learnt about the defeat of his army from a banker's letter. After a few days' halt, he resumed his journey and reached Pachhar, 32 miles north of Sironj where he got authentic news about the Panipat disaster which unhinged his brain and compelled him to return to Poona to die on 23rd June 1761.

Balaji Baji Rao was a man of handsome features and polite address. Unlike his predecessors, he was fond of art, cultured ease and a higher standard of living. Though a fairly successful soldier and diplomat, he was inferior to his father in military genius and statesmanship. The Maratha dominion attained its greatest extent under him and the Maratha horses "slaked their thirst in every stream that flowed between Cape Camorin and the Himalayas." Although a good administrator who introduced an equitable system of revenue and judicial administration in the territory directly under him in the Dakhin, he took no steps to establish any kind of regular government in the far flung empire which the Maratha sword had created. As far as this empire was

concerned, "he allowed Maratha rule to continue to be what it had been from the first, more an organisation of plunder than a system of administration." But in the Dakhin, he introduced sweeping reforms. He placed the civil administration of Maharashtra in the hands of his capable minister Ram Chandra Sohenvi, and after his death under his cousin Sadashiv Rao Bhau. A very capable revenue commissioner, named Balloba Manduvguni, reformed revenue rules and regulations and compelled the collectors to furnish their accounts. He checked abuses in the revenue collections and abolished many illegal exactions. The needs of the autonomous village republics were also attended to. The administration of justice was regularised and a learned jurist, named Bal Krishna Gadgil, was appointed Chief Justice. The Panchayats in the villages and towns were placed on sound basis. The Peshwa established a strong police in the city of Poona which was beautified by fine buildings and roads. He built temples and excavated a lake. On account of these reforms, he is gratefully remembered to this day by the Maratha peasantry.

But Balaji Baji Rao failed to keep a firm hand over his subordinates, such as the Holkar and the Sindia chiefs, who were permitted to indulge in long quarrels to the detriment of the Maratha interests in the north. He failed to set his brother Raghunath Rao on the right path, and had the foolish recourse of inviting the British to help him in putting down one of his chiefs, Tulaji Angria. He lost touch with north Indian politics and allowed Malhar Rao Holkar to form an unholy alliance with Najib-ud-daula, the most implacable enemy of the Marathas. The Peshwa alienated the Rajputs and the Jats by permitting the Holkar and Sindia chiefs to have a free hand against them. In short, Balaji Baji Rao must be held responsible for the enmity between the Marathas on the one hand, and the Rajputs, the Jats and in fact the Hindus of northern India in general, on the other, and the failure of the Maratha scheme of the establishment of Hindu rule for the whole of India.

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CHAPTER XII

ADMINISTRATION

THE SOVEREIGN, HIS POWERS AND DUTIES

While the rulers of the Sultanate period (1206-1526) bore the title of 'Sultan', the head of the Mughul State was known as 'the emperor'. Babur, the founder of the Mughul rule in India, was the first to adopt the title of Padshah (emperor) which continued to be borne by his successors until the end of the dynasty. The Mughul emperor was according to Quranic theory, the ruler of Musalmans only, that is, Amir-ul-Mumnin, or commander of the true believers, and was nominally responsible to the Muslim public (*jamait*) for his conduct as king. In actual practice he had a dual capacity, that is to say, he was the ruler and religious head of his Muslim subjects and the temporal ruler of non-Muslmans in his dominions. There was no check on his powers, but in practice his autocracy was tempered by the fear of a rebellion and by the existence of customary laws of the land. True, he could be deposed by a decree issued by the Ulema (Muslim theologian) for violating the Quranic law, but such a *fatwa* was a mere scrap of paper as long as the emperor was the master of a powerful army.

Babur and Humayun believed in the Islamic theory of kingship and tried to enforce the Quranic law as far as they could, but when Akbar became his own master, he rejected the Islamic theory of kingship and no longer remained the commander of the true believers (Amir-ul-Mumnin). He became the king of all his subjects, irrespective of religion and race. He believed that a king in spite of a thousand virtues, "cannot be fit for this (kingly) lofty office, if he does not inaugurate universal peace (toleration), and if he does not regard all classes of men and all sects of religions with a single eye for favour..............." (*Akbar-Nama*, Vol. II, p. 285). Besides sharing the views of other Turkish and Mughul rulers, Akbar believed that the king was superior to all other human beings and was the shadow and vicar of God. "Royalty", writes Abul Fazl, "is a light emanating from God, a ray

from the Sun, the illuminator of the univse, an argument of the book of perfection, the receptacle of all virtues." Such being the exalted status of the monarch, Akbar claimed for himself the position of not only the temporal ruler but also the spiritual head of all his people, whether Musalmans or non-Musalmans. He was of the opinion that the separation between the secular and religious leadership was the cause of trouble. That was why he tried to combine the two authorities in his person. The Muslim theory of kingship or khilafat also believed in the unity of the secular and the religious authorities. But, whereas the Muslim king was the spiritual head of his Muslim subjects only and spread the religion of Muhammad and kept the eternal difference between the Muslims and the non-Muslims, the king of Akbar's conception not only was to keep peace between different religions and creeds but was also to act as the missionary of a universal religion based on reason and not on any scripture.

Akbar's theory of kingship was with some modifications followed by Jahangir. But during the latter monarch's reign a tendency to revert to the Islamic theory became evident. Shah Jahan gave up Akbar's theory altogether. Under his son, Aurangzeb, the Islamic theory of sovereignty in its unalloyed form became the guiding principle of the emperor. The later Mughuls were too weak to follow in his footsteps. Nevertheless, they had faith in the Islamic theory of kingship.

The Mughul emperor enjoyed immense powers. Besides being head of the state, he was the commander-in-chief of the army and the fountain-head of justice. He was, besides, the defender of Islam and the spiritual head of his Muslim subjects. In this capacity he levied *zakat* from the latter and spent it on building mosques, subsidising theologians and relieving Muslim paupers. He had no regular council of ministers. Although there were invarably four to six ministers, they were not authorised to initiate policy. They could only advise but not vote. Their advice was not binding on the emperor. The Mughul emperor, therefore, was a perfect autocrat. But as from Akbar to Shah Jahan he considered the welfare of the subjects as his main duty, he can rightly be called a benevolent despot.

The Ministers and their Duties.

From Babur to Akbar there were four chief departments of administration. The number rose to six in the time of Aurangzeb.

These were :—(1) The Exchequer and Revenue under the Diwan; (2) The Imperial Household under the Khan-i-Saman or High Steward; (3) The Military Pay and Accounts Office under the Mir Bakhshi; (4) Cannon Law both civil and criminal, under the Chief Qazi; (5) Religious Endowment of Charities under the Chief Sadr; and (6) Censorship of Public Morals under the Muhtasib. Besides these, there were two inferior departments which under later Mughuls rose to the level of other departments. These were :—(7) Artillery under the Mir Atish or Darogah-i-Topkhana and (8) Intelligence and Posts under the Darogah of Dak-Chowki.

The Prime Minister. Under Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the prime minister bore the title of Vakil or Vakil-i-Mutlaq. Sometimes he was called wazir or wazir-i-Ala. The former title (Vakil) was revised under some of the later rulers; for example, Asad Khan was appointed Vakil-i-Mutlaq by Jahandar Shah, and his son Zulfiqar Khan as wazir. The prime-minister usually held the portfolio of revenue, but it was in his capacity as Diwan. He was primarily a civil officer and was very seldom given the command of an army. His main duty was to advise the king on all matters relating to the welfare of the state. "He was the intermediary between the king and the rest of the official world". He represented the emperor during the latter's absence or illness when he was a minor. His office received all revenue papers, returns and despatches from the provinces and the field army. He issued orders for all kinds of payments; he controlled the treasury and decided all questions relating to the collection of revenue.

He issued orders for appointments and promotions except those concerning menials and privates in the army. He had under him two high officers of the status of deputy ministers—one was *Diwan Khalisa Tankhz*. This latter officer was in charge of crown lands, and the other was *Diwan Tan* or in charge of jagir lands.

The Mir Bakhshi. He was the minister in charge of military establishment. All orders of appointment to mansabs passed through his office. He had to enforce the royal regulations in the army, supervise branding of horses and inspect the stipulated number of soldiers under mansabdars. He maintained a register of mansabdars specifying the number of troops etc., they were required to maintain, and passed their salary bills. That is why he was called Pay-Master General.

The Khan-i-Saman or High Steward. The Khan-i-Saman did not enjoy the rank of a minister in the time of Akbar, but under his successors this office became so important as to be reckoned among the fullfledged ministerial departments. The Khan-i-Saman was the head of the emperor's household department, including his personal servants, attendants and the royal kitchen. He supervised the emperor's daily expenditure, food, stores, etc. The numerous workshops or *karkhanas* for the manufacture of robes, jewellery and other precious articles needed by the emperor, his harem and court, were under Khan-i-Saman's charge. He, therefore, enjoyed great influence. Sometimes Khan-i-Saman was promoted to the wazirship. There was a high officer of the status of deputy minister under him, known as Diwan-i-Buyutat, popularly called Buyutat. His main work was to register the property of deceased persons in order (1) to secure payment of the state dues and (2) to safeguard the property for the heirs of the deceased.

The Chief Qazi. The emperor being the "Khalifa of the Age" was the highest judge and held court of justice on Wednesdays. His was the highest court of justice. But as the emperor had no time to hear all appeals, there was a chief justice known as Chief Qazi. He was "the judge in religious suits only and tried them according to Muslim law." The Chief Qazi appointed provincial, district and city qazis. Sometimes a large village had a local qazi. The qazis were assisted by muftis who were scholars of Arabic jurisprudence and stated the abstract law bearing on a case. The qazi possessed great power and a high position which were often abused. His office generally was a vast field of corruption and as the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes "all the Qazis of the Mughul period, with a few honourable exceptions were notorious for taking bribe."

The Chief Sadr. The Chief Sadr was in charge of the endowment and charity departments. The emperor and the members of the royal family granted jagirs and set apart large sums of money for the support of pious men, scholars, theologians and monks. The Sadr's duty was to scrutinise applications for grants and recommend suitable candidates for the same. He was, therefore, judge and supervisor of the endowment lands and cash charities. He appointed the provincial Sadrs. Sometime the Chief Sadr also acted as the Chief Qazi. But under Akbar and his successors these two high offices were held by two different persons. "The Sadr's position offered him boundless

possibility of enriching himself by means of bribes and peculation, and the Sadrs of Akbar's reign were notorious for their venality and cruel spirit".

The Censor of Public Moral. The Censor of Public Moral or Muhtasib had to enforce the Arabian Prophet's commands and to put down un-Islamic practices, such as "drinking of distilled spirits or fermented beer, *bhang* and other liquid intoxicants, gambling and certain kinds of sexual immorality. The punishment of heretical opinions, blasphemy against the Prophet and neglect of the five daily prayers and the observance of Ramzan by Muhammedans also lay within the province of the Censor." Under Aurangzeb, Muhtasibs were required to demolish newly built temples. Sometimes they had to fix the prices of the goods and enforce the use of correct weights and measures in the market.

The Superintendent of Artillery. This officer was originally a subordinate of the Mir Bakhshi; but as artillery came to play a very important role in wars, the head of this department rose to the position of a minister. Under the later Mughuls the Mir-i-Atish or Superintendent of Artillery had to make arrangements for the defence of the imperial palace-fort and sometimes even to reside inside it. He, therefore, came in touch with the emperor and rose to be an important minister. All kinds of artillery, including battering cannon and small pieces, were under his charge.

The Superintendent of Intelligence and Posts. He too became a departmental head during the later days of the Mughuls. The superintendent was in charge of hosts of newswriters, spies, and news carriers who were posted throughout the empire. These were to report regularly important happenings in their jurisdictions. There were provincial superintendents who worked under the orders of the imperial Darogah of Dak Chowki and sent weekly abstracts of news to the capital.

Provincial Administration

The Subedar and his Duties. The Mughul empire was divided into provinces. Their number was 15 in the time of Akbar; it rose to 20 in that of Aurangzeb. At the head of every province there was a governor whose title in the time of Akbar was Sipah-salar, but under his successors it was changed into Subedar or Nazim. His main duties

were to maintain law and order in his province, to enforce imperial decrees, and help the collection of revenue. He was also required to administer criminal justice. He was advised by the wazir at the time of his departure to take charge of a province, to keep himself in touch with important people in his suba, to recommend worthy officials for promotion, to punish rebellious zamindars and to send to the court fortnightly reports about notable occurrences in his province. He was also advised to keep his troops in proper trim, to be vigilant, to help the poor and the pious and to increase the cultivation by protecting husbandmen. Another important work assigned to him was the collection of the tribute from vassal princes close to his jurisdiction.

The Provincial Diwan. The diwan was the second officer in the province. He enjoyed in the early days of the Mughul rule an equal status with the subedar, but not equal authority. In fact, these two officers "had to keep a strict and jealous watch on each other, thus continuing the earliest administrative policy and tradition of the Arabs. . . ." The diwan was in charge of revenue administration. He had to make arrangements for the assessment and collection of revenue and to appoint collectors for the purpose. He also administered civil justice. The diwan was selected by the imperial diwan or Wazir-i-ala and acted directly under his orders. He was urged to increase the cultivation, to keep watch over the treasury, to appoint honest amins and amils, to cherish the peasantry, to advance them loans (*taqavi*) and to send regular papers of his department to the wazir's office.

There were several other officers in every province, such as the bakhshi, the qazi, the sadr, the buyutat and the muhtasib. These had to discharge the same duties in their jurisdiction as the ministers bearing these titles and functioning at the capital had for the whole of the empire.

Districts or Sarkars. The provinces were divided into districts or sarkars. At the head of each district there was an officer, called faujdar who corresponded to the district collector of our time. He worked directly under the subedar's orders and was in constant touch with him. He was an executive officer and had to command a contingent of troops. His main duties were the maintenance of law and order and the execution of royal decrees and regulations. He had to keep the powerful zamindars under check and the roads open to traffic and

free from robbers and dacoits. "In short, the faujdar, as his name means, was only the commander of a military force stationed in the country to put down small rebellions, disperse or arrest robber-gangs, take cognizance of all violent crimes, and make demonstration of force to overawe opposition to the revenue authorities or the criminal judge or the censor." (Sarkar: *Mughal Administration*, p. 57.)

Parganas or Mahals. The districts were sub-divided into parganas or mahals. In every pargana there were a shiqdar, an amil, an amin, a fotadar (treasurer) and a few bitikchis (writers). The shiqdar was in charge of the general administration of the pargana and had to maintain law and order. He had a small contingent of troops under him. He also acted as a criminal magistrate, but his power in this work was limited. The amil had to deal directly with the peasants and his main work was assessment and collection of revenue. He was also required to assist the shiqdar in maintenance of law and order and the punishment of miscreants. The fotadar was in charge of the pargana treasury and had to maintain a register of its income and expenditure. The bitikchis were writers or clerks.

Administration of towns. The chief administrator of the city was the kotwal. He was the chief of the city police and was appointed by the central government. His main duties were :— (1) Watch and ward of the town; (2) control of the market; (3) care and disposal of heirless property; (4) watch over the people's conduct and prevention of crime; (5) prevention of social abuses; (6) regulations of cemeteries, burials and slaughter houses. For the discharge of these duties he had to keep a contingent of horse and foot under his command and a fairly large quota of policemen. He was required to divide the city into wards and to post reliable subordinates in charge of each ward with instructions to keep a register of the names and character rolls of all the inhabitants. He was to instruct the spies to report to him about every person coming in or going out of the city and to keep control over the sarais. He was required not to allow any man to remain idle, for workless people are a source of mischief. He had to keep an eye over professional women, dancing girls and vendors of spirits and other intoxicants.

Large cities were divided into wards or mohallas each of which was self-contained and was inhabited mainly by people of one profession or of one caste. The artisans were grouped together under various

guilds, like the merchants' guilds and the craftsmen's guilds of medieval Europe. There was a guild master and also a broker for every guild, and business was transacted through them. There were suburbs outside the big cities. These were inhabited by a particular tribe of an important nobleman's family and followers, e.g., some of the suburbs of old Delhi were Mughulpura, Jaisinghpura, Jaswantsinghpura, and those of Agra were Baluch-pura and Pratap-pura. Usually, there was a wall round every city or town, but the suburbs lay outside the city wall. At the time of founding a city the main roads were laid and a common drain for sewage water (ganda nala) was dug by the emperor's orders. Sometimes a pucca aqueduct for bringing water from a river or a lake was constructed by the government. But the citizens built their own arterial streets and made their own arrangements for drinking water by sinking wells. The Government concerned itself with only internal security, keeping of the main roads clean, control of the market and the realisation of the taxes, like market toll and custom and octroi duties. The most important tax charged from the citizens was a cess, levied on the grain market and salt market. The government had nothing to do with lighting the streets, providing water supply, making conservancy arrangement, providing medical aid or education to the people. These were the private concerns of the people and were left to them.

Village Communities. The most important constitutional contribution of our race was in the field of rural administration. Since times immemorial, there existed in India well-organised village communities which managed their affairs on domestic lines. Every village was an autonomous commonwealth. It had a council consisting of the heads of the families, which was responsible for the village administration, such as, watch and ward, sanitation, elementary education, irrigation, medical relief, public works, moral and religious welfare of the people, and the dispensation of justice. It also made arrangements for recreation, music and celebration of festivals. There was a panchayat for trying cases. The village council or panchayat was divided into a number of sub-committees each of which was entrusted with separate duties. The members of these sub-committees were chosen by some kind of election. Beside, there were caste panchayats to decide cases or disputes. The village functionaries were: one or two watchmen, a priest, a school master, an astrologer, a carpenter, a black-smith, a potter, a washerman, a barber, a physician and a patwari or account-

ant. The village communities were responsible for the preservation of our society and culture through the ages.

Army.

The Mughul military organisation was called mansabdari system. It was not altogether new to the land, for we find traces of the system in the time of the sultans of Delhi. Sher Shah and Islam Shah too had some sort of gradation in their armies which had commanders of one thousand, two thousand, or more troops. But the system was regularised by Akbar who made it as scientific as it could be.

The word mansab means place or rank. The mansabdars were, therefore, holders of ranks in the imperial service. Under Akbar the lowest rank was that of 10, and the highest that of 10,000 but it was raised to 12,000 towards the end of his reign. The ranks above 5,000 were reserved for the imperial princes: but sometimes after, a few nobles were promoted to the rank of 7,000. Under Jahangir and Shah Jahan the highest rank open to a noble was 8,000, while that for the imperial princes it was raised to 40,000. During the times of later Mughuls the upward limit reached 50,000.

The mansabdars were classified in three groups, *i.e.*, those from 10 to 400 were known by the common title of mansabdars. Those who held the rank of 500 to 2,500 were called Umara, and those who held the rank of 3,000 or above were called Umara-i-Azam or great nobles.

At the beginning Akbar had established only one class or grade for each mansab. But towards the end of his reign he introduced three grades in each of the mansabs from 5,000 upwards by instituting what is known as sawar rank. Mansabdars were not required to maintain the full number of troops indicated by their ranks or mansabs. It is consequently wrong to call a mansabdar of 1,000 as the commander of 1,000, as has been done by some historians, such as, Blochmann, Irwine and Smith. The mansabdars were no doubt required to maintain a certain number of troops in their employ; but it was only a fraction of their ranks. The mansabs were a convenient method of fixing the status and salaries of imperial officers. There were no fixed rules of appointment, promotion or dismissal of the mansabdars. The usual practicle was that when a mansabdar did well at muster and brought the requisite number of troops, he was promoted to the next higher mansab.

Scholars hold divergent opinion about the significance of *zat* and *sawar*. The present writer is of the opinion that when the system was introduced by Akbar, there was no divergence between the rank of a mansabdar and the actual number of the troops, horses, elephants etc., put together that he was required to maintain. But as the mansabdars failed to maintain and to bring to muster the requisite number of cavalry, though they continued to have the total number of horses, elephants, camels, etc. prescribed for their several ranks. Akbar realised that the lumping together of cavalry and beasts of burden etc. was confusing. It was probably to put an end to this confusion and to secure an absolute compliance of the number of horsemen fixed for each rank that Akbar instituted the *sawar* rank as distinct from the *zat* rank. Thereafter the *zat* rank indicated the number of horses, elephants, beasts of burden and carts required to be maintained, but not horsemen or cavalry. The *zat* rank was not personal rank, as has been wrongly supposed by modern writers. The rank, on the other hand, indicated the actual number of horsemen to be maintained by a mansabdar in Akbar's reign. Under his successors this regulation too became a little lax and the number of horsemen fell below the sawar rank. Shah Jahan was, therefore, obliged to lay down the rule that every mansabdar must have one-fourth of the troops of his nominal rank; but if he was employed outside India, he might have one-fifth and not one-fourth of his nominal rank. According to Sir Jadunath Sarkar, during the last years of Aurangzeb's reign "the actual strength of the Mughul army was only one-tenth of the nominal contingents of all his officers added together." In the time of Aurangzeb's successors the ranks became honorary and it was not necessary for a mansabdar of 7,000 to have even seven horsemen in his service. For example, Lutf-Ulla Khan Sadiq, a mansabdar of 7,000 in the time of Muhammad Shah (1719-1748), did not entertain in his service even seven asses, to say nothing of seven horsemen.

Every mansabdar of 5,000 and below comprised three grades, namely, first grade, second grade and third grade. A mansabdar belonged to the first grade of a particular rank if his *sawar* rank was the same as his *zat* rank. If, on the other hand, his *sawar* rank was less than *zat* rank, but did not fall below half of the latter, he belonged to the second grade in that rank. But, if this *sawar* rank was less than half of his *zat* rank or he had no *sawar* rank at all, he belonged to the third grade in that rank. For example, a mansabdar of 5,000 *zat* rank be-

longed to the first grade in the rank of 5,000, if his *sawar* rank was also 5,000. He belonged to the second grade, if his *zat* rank was 5,000 and his *sawar* rank 2,500. And if his *zat* rank was 5,000 and *sawar* rank less than 2,500, he belonged to the third grade. This rule was applicable to all mansabs. A further complication was introduced by the institution of what are known as *Du-Aspa* and *Seh-Aspa*. *Du-Aspa* troopers were those who had two led horses, and *Seh-Aspa* troopers had three led horses. The salary of the troopers was calculated on the basis of the number of led horses under them.

The mansabdars were authorised to recruit their own troops who belonged to their own race or tribe. Most of the mansabdars under Akbar and his successors upto the time of Muhammad Shah were foreign Turks, Persians and Afghans and indigenous Rajputs. There were some Arabs and men of other foreign nationalities also. The number of Indian Muslims holding high ranks was small. The mansabdars were required to purchase their own horses and equipment; but sometimes these were supplied by the government. A mansabdar was paid in lump-sum for all the troops etc., under him. Thus the individual soldiers knew only their own chiefs from whom they received their salaries, though they served the emperor and were under his orders.

The salary of a mansabdar depended upon the actual number of well-armed troopers that he could bring to the muster held by the Mir Bakhshi. At the time of enlistment and first muster the descriptive rolls of the troops and horses were recorded and the government mark (*dagh*) on the right thigh and the mansabdar's mark (*dagh*) on the left thigh of every horse was put in the presence of the Bakhshi. The mansabdars were paid high salaries which even after deducting the cost of establishment were quite handsome.

Branches of the Army.

The Mughul forces consisted of five branches, infantry, cavalry, fire-arms men, elephants and war boats.

Infantry—The infantry was an ill-paid and ragged branch of the army. It was of two kinds, namely *Ahsham* and *Seh-bandi*. The soldiers of both kinds were armed each with a sword and a short spear. Their fighting value was nominal. The Seh-bandi troops were recruited from unemployed idlers and were usually required to help

in the collection of revenue. They were more like the civil police than military men.

Cavalry—There were two kinds of horsemen. The first were those who were mounted and equipped by the state. They were known as bargirs. The second kind of troopers were those who brought their own horses and arms and were called Silehdars. They were paid higher salaries than the bargirs.

Fire-arms men—This category of troops consisted of gunners and musketeers (soldiers armed with muskets). They were under the Mir Atish or superintendent of artillery. The Mughul artillery was divided into two sections known as *jinsi* and *dasti*. The *jinsi* consisted of heavy artillery, whereas *dasti* consisted of light pieces including muskets. and swivels. These two sections had their separate arsenals and commanders ; but both were under the Mir Atish.

Elephants—Elephants were employed in the battle. They were ridden by commanders who could have a clear view of the field from their backs. They were employed to charge the enemy, to break infantry formations and to break open the gates. But when artillery began to be used on a large scale, elephants became more of a liability than an asset.

War Boats—The Mughuls had no navy of their own. They delegated the naval defence of the western coast to the Abyssinians and Sidis of Janjira, but in lower Bengal the government maintained a flotila of boats of various types. These boats were placed under a Darogha and were equipped with artillery. Besides there was an officer called Mir Bahar who was required to furnish boats for throwing a bridge over the rivers to enable the imperial army to cross. But the state did not maintain any considerable number of boats of its own.

Besides mansabdars and their troops, there were troops of other description, such as, Ahdais (gentleman troopers) and Dhakhilis (supplementary troopers) who were directly recruited by the Mir Bakhshi and also paid directly from the central treasury. Though the Mir Bakhshi recruited the latter category of troops, he was in charge of muster and discipline of all troops whether recruited by himself or by the mansabdars. But the Mir Bakhshi was not the commander of the troops. The emperor himself was the commander-in-chief of all

his forces. The Mir Bakhshi's functions were to recruit soldiers, to hold musters and pass their pay bills.

The Mughul troops were not divided into regiments. There were no regimental drill or discipline and no real training. The actual number of troops was only a fraction of the nominal strength as recorded in Mir Bakhshi's registers. There was no contract between the commander-in-chief and the individual troops, who looked upon mansabdars as their immediate chiefs. The pays of the troops were generally in arrears. During the time of the later Mughuls sometime their salaries for three years or more were not paid. Originally the strength of the Mughul army depended upon the mobility of its cavalry. This mobility, however, was lost in the hills and deserts of Rajputana and Maharashtra. During the later days of Aurangzeb's reign, it became "A helpless prey to the agile Maratha" and in the 18th century it proved hopeless before "the disciplined European-led sepoy battalions."

Revenue Administration.

The fiscal resources of the empire were divided into two main divisions—central and local. The central revenue was derived from commerce, mint, presents, inheritance, salt, custom and land. Of this, land revenue was the most lucrative and important. Babur and Humayun charged pilgrim's tax and *jizia* from the Hindus and *zakat* from the Muslims. The pilgrim's tax and *jizia* were abolished by Akbar, but they were reimposed by Aurangzeb early in 1679. The *jizia* was again abolished during the domination of the Sayyid brothers. It was reimposed by Muhammad Shah, but had again to be reabolished. The pilgrim's tax, however, and the tax for throwing of the bones of dead bodies in the Ganga continued to be realised from the Hindus until the extinction of the Mughul authority.

Land Revenue—Babur and Humayun allowed the land revenue system of the Sultanate period to remain in existence and generally collected revenue on the basis of the old records without surveying the land and ascertaining the actual produce of the soil. But Akbar after a series of experiments completely overhauled the revenue system and finally established what is known as Todar Mal's '*bandobast*'. This system based on the famous *Ain-i-Dahsala* of 1580 implied certain fixed processes. First of all, the land was surveyed according to a definite

system of mensuration and the total area of cultivable land in the posession of each cultivator in every village and consequently of the whole empire was ascertained. Secondly, all the cultivable land was classified into four divisions on the basis of continuity or otherwise of its cultivation. These were, *polaj*, *parauti*, *chachar* and *banjar*. Thirdly, on the basis of past ten years' produce the average yield per bigha of each kind of land in respect of every crop was ascertained separately for every pargana. The state charged one-third of this produce. Fourthly, the state demand in kind was commuted into cash. For this purpose Akbar divided his entire empire into many dasturs, each of them having uniform prices for various kinds of corn. An average of the last ten years' prices in respect of each kind of crop was ascertained separately for each dastur. The average was considered as the current price of the grain. The state demand from each cultivator was fixed on the basis of the above calculation. It was not necessary to ascertain every year the actual produce or the current prices of grain in order to fix the state demand from the cultivators. But the government continued to maintain the records of the produce and prices of crops in order to revise the assessment on their basis from time to time. Originally the system was introduced in the khalisa territory only. Later on, Akbar extended it to include the jagir lands also. Like Sher Shah, Akbar charged one-third of the produce payable in cash or kind. The settlement was made direct with the cultivators and was, therefore, *ryotwari*. Every cultivator was given a *patta* (title deed) and was required to sign a *qabuliyat* (deed of agreement). Akbar granted remission of the revenue, if an unexpected calamity befell a village or a pargana, and the remission was proportionate to the extent of the damage caused. The revenue was realised by government officers in the parganas who were assisted by village patwaris and headmen. The system was scientific and just. All Anglo-Indian writers have spoken highly of it.

The system worked well under the vigilant care of its founder, but it began to deteriorate from the time of Jahangir. Under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb the government introduced the ruinous system of farming out of land to contractors side by side of Akbar's *ryotwari* settlement. First, the latter system was withdrawn from the jagir lands and subsequently the farming system began to be introduced for the khalisa land also. Under the later Mughuls, Todar Mal's '*bandobast*' disappeared and the farming out of land became the rule.

Throughout our medieval period there was chronic antagonism between the peasants and the revenue collectors whether they were contractors or government officers. In defiance of the imperial wishes, the collectors tried to exact much more than the legitimate revenue from the peasantry in the shape of cesses or imposts. These were of various categories and so numerous that it is not possible to enumerate them. They were abolished again and again by the Mughul emperors, but managed to reappear in some form or other. On account of the illegal exactions the uncertainty of the times, and the fact that the land was supposed to belong to the king who had the right to have a major share of the produce leaving a bare subsistence to the tillers of the soil, the peasantry tried to evade payment as far as possible. They, therefore, fell in chronic arrears. The result of all this was that leaving the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir the condition of the Indian peasantry during the Mughul period was far from satisfactory.

Currency and Mint.

The finance department managed the currency and controlled the mint and the treasury. Babur and Humayun had allowed the old currency system to continue and struck coins bearing their own names. The system was improved by Sher Shah who introduced a rupee of 175-180 grains and the copper dam. Akbar further reformed the currency in 1577 and appointed Khwaja Abus Samad of Shiraz to be master of the imperial mint at Delhi. He issued gold, silver and copper coins of different weights and values. The gold coins alone were of 26 varieties. The chief silver coin was the rupee which weighed 172½ grains. The rupee was both square and circular in shape. Of the copper currency the chief coin was dam, also known as the paisa or fulus. It weighed 323·5 grains. Forty dams were equal to one rupee. Akbar did not engrave his portrait on the coins. Jahangir was the first Mughul emperor to put his portrait on coins and one of his coins bore his figure with a wine cup in his right hand. Another silver coin of Jahangir had the signs of zodaics engraved on it. Both Jahangir and Shah Jahan allowed Akbar's currency system to remain unaltered and only inserted their names on the coins struck by them. There was a minor change in the time of Aurangzeb who raised this silver coin to 5/8%. The system continued till the fall of the Mughul empire.

The gold and silver needed for coinage was mostly imported from abroad, chiefly from East-Africa. No one was permitted to

export gold and silver from the country. The bullion imported into India were used for coinage, for the manufacture of ornaments and other articles of luxury and for hoarding as a treasure. Copper was found in abundance in Rajputana and Central India and the Himalayan region.

Administration of Justice.

The judicial system of the Sultanate period was based on Islamic law which divided the people into two classes—believers and non-believers and did not recognise the latter as citizens of the state. The king administered Islamic law in deciding all cases, whether the parties to a suit were Muslims or non-Muslims. This practice continued to be followed by Babur and Humayun. Although Akbar had rejected the Islamic theory of kingship, he made no fundamental change in the judicial system. He only introduced minor reforms and reorganised the system to make it efficient. An important change introduced by him was to restrict the scope of Islamic law and to extend that of general or customary law of the land so as to make it include as many cases as possible. For example, he did not apply the Islamic law of capital punishment for apostasy from Islam or the propagation of Hinduism or Christianity. He appointed Hindu judges to decide the cases to which the Hindus were parties. Barring these modifications the Islamic judicial system continued to exist throughout the Mughul period, including even the reign of Akbar.

The emperor was throughout the period the fountain head of justice and decided cases personally in the open court on Wednesdays which were reserved for this business. The chief qazi and other judges and theologians attended the royal court. The emperor's was the highest court of appeal, but sometimes he acted as a court of first instance also. But very few people could afford to approach the royal court and the emperor could spare very little time for hearing cases.

The next higher court was that of the chief qazi who decided cases in accordance with the Quranic law at the capital. His too was a court of appeal, but like the emperor sometimes he acted as a court in the first instance also. There was a provincial qazi at the head-quarters of each province. He was appointed by the chief qazi of the empire. A qazi was posted to every town and to large villages with

considerable Muhammadan population. "As the provincial qazi's jurisdiction was very vast and he had no assistant or deputy locally appointed to share his burden, only a small part of the disputes in the province could be tried by him." (Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 96-97.) For this reason most of the cases in the rural areas and even in the towns and cities were decided by panchayats.

The Mughul judicial system was probably the weakest branch of administration. It did not conceive of a graded hierarchy of courts controlled by a department of the central government. It did not have one law code for all the people, and no supreme court of judicature for the interpretation of the law. The Mughuls had three separate "judicial agencies all working at the same time and independent of each other." There were the courts of religious law under the qazis, the courts of common law under governors and other local authorities, and political courts under the emperor or his agents.

Courts of Religious Law. Originally the qazi used to decide all civil and criminal cases, but under the Mughuls this was given up and the qazi decided only such cases as were closely connected with religion, such as, cases arising out of disputes on points of family law and inheritance, cases concerning religious endowment, etc. These used to be decided in accordance with the Quranic law. The qazi was bound to accept the interpretation of the law as given by earlier authorities and expounded by the mufti. The mufti whose original designation was Vakil-i-Shara or 'champion of the Quranic law, roughly corresponded with the Advocate General of our time and exercised great influence over the qazi. The qazi's duties also included the administration of *waqfs* and that of the estates of orphans, imbeciles and persons of similar description. He also prepared the document relating to the *mehr* (contract of marriage) for Muslim women who had no male relatives. In the qazi's court the evidence of non-Muslims was not valid.

The qazi administered the Muslim or Quranic law and no other law was recognised by the state. The Islamic law had its birth outside India. It was not the result of legislation, but had originated in revelation. There were two other sources of this law, that is, precedent or case laws and opinion of jurists. It is worthy of note that both these "merely professed to make the meaning of the Quran explicit and not to add any principle or rule but what is written in the Book

of God." Moreover, as all the conceptions of Islamic law were foreign, the decision of an Indian Qazi, however learned, was never "considered authoritative enough to lay down a legal principle, elucidate an obscurity in the Quran, or supplement the Quranic law by following the line of its obvious intention in respect of cases not explicitly provided by it." Therefore, the Indian qazis depended on digests of Islamic law of the four schools of Muslim jurists, *i.e.*, the Hanafi, the Malaki, the Shafi and the Hanbali. The Mughul emperors followed the Hanafi or orthodox Sunni school. Aurangzeb had a digest of the Hanafi school compiled by a syndicate of theologians at a cost of two lakhs of rupees. It became known as Fatawa-i-Alamgiri. "Muslim law in India was, therefore, incapable of growth and change except so far as it reflected changes of juristic thought in Arabia or Egypt." (J. Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p. 101.)

On account of these limitations and also because of the fact that there is no separate civil law as distinct from religious law in an Islamic state, the non-Muslim population must have suffered greatly in matters relating to administration of justice throughout our medieval history. While Akbar reformed all other aspects of administration, he did not interfere with the administration of criminal justice which continued to be based on Islamic law. One can easily imagine the hardships of the Hindu population under the sway of Islamic jurisprudene.

Courts of Secular law. The secular courts were presided over by governors, other local officers, faujdars and kotwals. In the time of Akbar, Brahman Pandits were employed to decide cases of this nature in which the parties were Hindus. The *panchayats*, both village and caste, came under this category. The judges of secular courts were not subordinate to the qazi. They had no connection with him. They administered the common or customary law and not the *shara* or the Quranic law.

Political Courts. Political cases, such as rebellion, peculation, debasing the coinage, rioting, theft, high-way robbery and murder of state officers were decided either by the king or his agents, such as, provincial governors, faujdars or kotwals according to the requirements of the state and not according to Quranic law. The qazi had nothing to do with such cases.

Classification of Crime. According to Islamic jurisprudence there are three groups of crime, namely, (1) offence against God, (2) offence against the State, and (3) offence against private individuals.

The first category of the crimes, namely offences against God is inexcusable and must be punished as it comes within "the Right of God (haqq-Allah)". The other two categories are excusable and compoundable with the wrongdoer. "Thus, curiously enough man slaughter is not a violation of God's law, nor of the king's peace, but only a damage to the family of the murdered man, which can be settled by paying money compensation (called 'the price of blood') to the next of the kin of the victim, without the Executive Head of the State, or the judge of Cannon Law having to take any further notice of it. It was only when the relatives of the murdered man refused to accept money damages and insisted on retaliation, that the qazi had to pronounce the sentence of death and the executive to enforce it." (Sarkar, *Mughal Administration*, p.102).

Punishments according to Muslim Law. There were four classes of punishment for crimes, namely, (1) hadd, (2) tazir, (3) qisas and (4) tashhir. There was one more kind of punishment, namely, hajat or lock-up.

Hadd. This was a punishment for crimes against God and, therefore, could not be altered by any human being. Under *hadd* the following offences and punishments were prescribed :—

	Crime	*Punishment*
(*i*)	Adultery.	To be punished by stoning to death.
(*ii*)	Fornication.	Scourging (100 stripes).
(*iii*)	Falsely accusing a married woman of adultery.	Scourging (80 stripes).
(*iv*)	Drinking wine and other liquors.	Scourging (80 stripes).
(*v*)	Theft.	Cutting off of the right hand.
(*vi*)	Highway robbery.	Cutting off of the hands and the feet.
(*vii*)	Robbery with murder	Death by the sword or by crucification.
(*viii*)	Apostasy (*kufr*).	Death.

Tazir. Under this head came those offences which were not specifically mentioned under *hadd*. The judge had, of course, to use his discretion in the matter of awarding punishment for the crimes under this category, and if he liked, he could excuse the culprit altogether, as *tazir* did not come under the category of the "Right of God", and was intended to reform the culprit. It was punishable by public reprimand, dragging the offender to the door of the court, exposing him to public scorn, imprisonment or exile or boxing of the ears, or scourging (3 to 75 stripes) according to the rank of the offender. Sometimes a fine was imposed.

Qisas or Retaliation. In case of murder or some deep injury the usual form of punishment was retaliation. It was a personal right of the victim or his next of kin to demand retaliation or compensation. If that was not considered, then the case was sent to the qazi for trial. If the relatives of the deceased were satisfied with the money damage offered by the murderer or pardoned him without compensation, the king took no notice of the crime. "For minor offences the retaliation was, as laid down by the mosaic law, 'a tooth for a tooth and an eye for an eye', with certain exceptions."

Tashhir or public degradation. Recognised in the Islamic law books, it was inflicted by Muslim kings and qazis throughout our medieval period. It was recognised even by the Hindus. The usual form of *tashhir* was shaving the offender's head, mounting him on an ass "with his face towards its tail, covered with dust, sometimes with a garland of shoes placed round his neck," and parading him through the main streets with noisy music and turning him out of the city. Sometimes the face of the culprit was painted black.

The Quranic law is not explicit about offences against the state, such as, rebellion, mis-appropriation of state dues and default in the payment of revenues. Therefore, punishment in such cases was inflicted at the emperor's pleasure. The capital punishment inflicted was sometimes by trodding the offender to death by an elephant, "burying him alive, causing him to be stung to death by a cobra, or pressing him to death." Tortures of various degree were also common forms of punishment. The capital punishment was inflicted for the following crimes:—

(1) Robbery with killing.

(2) Murder when the next of kin of a murdered person refused to accept money compensation.
(3) Adultery.
(4) Apostasy from Islam.
(5) Heresy.
(6) Insult to the Prophet (Sabb-al-Rasul).

Besides the above, killing was lawful (according to Hanafi school of Muslim law which was followed by the Mughul emperors) in the following three cases:—

(1) The killing of one's unbelieving kinsmen if he insulted Allah or his Prophet.
(2) The killing of an unbelieving prisoner of war "in the case when the reasons for killing him exactly balance those for granting him life."
(3) Killing in self defence of one's life, property or one's helper.

Imprisonment (hajat) was generally the punishment for non-payment of debt and other petty offences.

Religious Policy.

Some modern scholars hold the view that the Mughul period was one of complete religious toleration and that the Mughul rulers allowed freedom of religious belief and open worship to all communities. A close study of the contemporary documents proves the falsity of this theory. Out of a little over 200 years (1526-1748) of Mughul rule, almost full freedom of belief and worship for the Hindus obtained only for about 40 years of Akbar's reign (1566-1605). During the reign of Jahangir (1605-1627) religious tolerance was restricted in some measure; under Shah Jahan (1628-1657) it was further reduced and an attempt was made to revert to the practice of pre-Akbar days. It is common knowledge that Aurangzeb repealed the innovations of Akbar, established the supremacy of Islam and abrogated all measures giving any kind of religious tolerance to non-Muslims. His example was followed by his successors and religious intolerance continued to be at least in theory until power passed out of the hands of the later Mughul emperors. It will thus be clear that the Mughul period cannot be described as an age of unalloyed religious toleration. The truth is that it was an age of struggle between two forces,

namely, toleration and Muslim fanaticism with the latter triumphing in the end.

Although Babur was a cultured man with a broader outlook on life than that of the rulers of the Sultanate period, yet he followed the Quranic policy of upholding the supremacy of Islam and of not giving religious freedom to non-Muslims. His memoirs very often refer to Hindus as kafirs and to his holy war (jihad) against them. Rana Sanga was to him an accursed pagan. Babur described his war against that valiant Rajput chief and that against Medni Rai of Chanderi as wars fought for the glory of Islam against unbelievers. This 'cultured' emperor uses the traditional epithet—the infidel went to hell (kafir ba jahannum raft)—in reference to the death of a Hindu. He exempted Muslims from stamp duties and confined the tax to the Hindus alone. He demolished Hindu temples at Chanderi and at his orders one of the officers named, Mir Baqi, destroyed the sacred temple at Ayodhya (Faizabad) that commemorated Shri Ram Chandra's birth-place and built a mosque in its place in 1528-29 (*vide* inscription on the mosque; *The U. P. Historical Society Journal, 1936*). Other Hindu and Jain temples were razed to the ground during his reign. "There is no reason to believe," writes Prof. Sri Ram Sharma "that he (Babur) used any measure to relax the harshness of the religious policy which he found prevailing."*

Humayun followed in the footsteps of his father as far as religious policy towards the Hindus was concerned. He refused to attack Bahadur Shah of Gujarat, while the latter was engaged in a fight with the Rajputs of Chittor, for he did not like to earn the odium of attacking a brother Muslim when the latter was earning religious merit by defeating an infidel. Circumstances, however, compelled Humayun to tolerate Shiaism. Sher Shah, the Afghan ruler, who expelled Humayun from India was even more desirous of upholding the supremacy of Islam. He destroyed the chief Hindu temple of Jodhpur and converted it into a mosque which is still standing there. He undertook a holy war (*jihad*) against Puran Mal of Raisin in order to earn religious merit by slaying an arch-infidel. Sher Shah's successor, Islam Shah, was completely under the influence of Muslim theo-

* The Bhopal document purporting to be Babur's will and enjoining Humayun to behave liberally towards the Hindus and to abolish cow-slaughter is a forgery, and need not be taken seriously.

logians and his religious policy was one of persecution of the Hindus and of the Muslim heretics.

It was left to Akbar the Great to introduce a radical change in the religious policy of the empire. Believing that "truth is an inhabitant of every place," he first of all abolished the pilgrims' tax (1563) that the Hindus were required to pay. Next, he abolished the hated *jizia* in 1564, and thus created a common citizenship for all his subjects. After this he gradually removed all other restrictions relating to public worship of non-Muslims, including the building of temples and churches. He put an end to the "myth that the public celebration of the Hindu worship was a profanation to Muslim ears and eyes" by allowing his Hindu queens to instal and worship images in his own palace. He went a step further, and prohibited forcible conversion to Islam and permitted the Hindus to reclaim those of their brethren who had been forcible compelled to embrace Islam. (Badayuni, Vol. II, p. 398). In 1603, he allowed Christians to make willing converts. He dis-established Islam as the religion of the state and thus placed all the faiths in his empire on a footing of equality. In order to show respect to the religious sentiments of the Hindus who formed as vast majority of the country's population, Akbar forbade the use of beef in the royal kitchen and prohibited animal slaughter for many days in the year. He personally almost gave up meat eating and adopted many articles of Hindu dress and Hindu mode of life. He participated in some of the Hindu festivals, such as, *raksha-bandhan*, *dipawali*, *vasant* and *shivratri*. He opened the highest services to non-Muslims. Thus he inaugurated an era of complete religious toleration.

Not content with these, Akbar ardently desired religious unity of the intelligentsia in the land, and therefore, he founded a religion of his own, named, *Din-i-Ilahi*. The principal features of this innovation have been described in a previous chapter of this book and need not be repeated. Suffice it to say that *Din-i-Ilahi* was founded with the laudable object of bringing to an end religious bitterness and conflict. It is no wonder that Akbar failed to realise this object. Both Hindus and Muslims were so orthodox in that age that it was unthinkable for them to give up their hereditary beliefs and practices.

On Jahangir's accession an attempt was made by Muslim theologians to win back their lost influence and to persuade the new

emperor to put an end to religious toleration. In this they failed, for Jahangir would not go back on the path chalked out by his father. But he began taking greater interest in the fortune of Islam in his own territory. Now and then, he converted Hindus and Christians to Islam and punished some Muslim young men for visiting a Hindu sanyasi and showing inclination towards Hindusim. In the fifteenth year of his reign, he prohibited the inter-marriages between Hindu men and Muslim women of Rajauri in Kashmir. His conduct towards Guru Arjun of the Sikhs was partly inspired by religious motive; and his harsh policy towards the Jains of Gujarat was due to the same reason. Barring these lapses, Jahangir ordinarily continued his father's policy of toleration and in general made little distinction between the Muslims and non-Muslims. He refrained from placing any restriction, except in the case of the Jains, on public worship and open celebration of relegious fairs and festivals by any communities. "With all these," writes Prof. S.R. Sharma, "Jahangir sometimes acted as a protector of the true faith (Islam) rather than as the king of the vast majority of non-Muslims. Departure, however slight, from Akbar's wide outlook had thus begun." (*Religious Policy of the Mughul Emperors* p. 90).

Jahangir's successor Shah Jahan was an orthodox Muslim. He endeavoured to give his court an Islamic atmosphere, abolished *sijida* (prostration before the monarch), discontinued the Hindu practice of *tuladan* (weighing himself against different commodities), the celebration of Hindu festivals like Rakhi, Dusehra, Vasant etc., and restored the Hijri era to the state calender. He began celebrating at court the Muslim festivals of the *Id*, *shab-i-barat*, *milad* and *barawafat* in orthodox Muslim fashion. While his predecessors used to put the *tika* sign on the forehead of the Hindu Rajas at the time of their accession, Shah Jahan delegated this duty to his prime-minister. He reimposed the pilgrims' tax on the Hindus and remitted it only on the importunity of his court poet, Kavindracharya of Banaras. Not content with these measures, Shah Jahan forbade the building of new temples and the repairs of old ones. He even embarked on a campaign of destruction of new temples, as the result of which 3 temples in Gujarat, 72 in Banaras and its neighbourhood and several others in Allahabad, Kashmir and other provinces, were razed to the ground. The emperor invariably destroyed Hindu temples in the course of his military operations, such as, those

in Bundelkhand. During his reign, Aurangzeb, as viceroy of Gujarat, destroyed many temples, the notable among them being that of Chintamani near Sarashpur. Thus Shah Jahan, besides destroying new Hindu temples in the empire, reverted to the practice of systematically desecrating religious shrines of rebel chiefs and enemies. Out of the materials of those Hindu temple he erected mosques. Some years after his religious fanaticism was softened due probably to Dara's increasing influence and the orders for the destruction of new temples was revoked, though his prohibitory orders regarding the conversion of Muslims to Hinduism remained in force throughout his reign. He forbade inter-marriages of Hindus and Muslims which were common in the district of Badhauri and Bhimbar in Jammu. The Hindus of this region used to marry Muslim girls and to convert them to their faith. Shah Jahan ordered that the converted Muslim girls should be restored to their fathers and the Hindus who had married them must either pay a fine or become Muslims themselves. He sentenced to death a Hindu named, Dalpat, who had converted and married a Muslim girl and brought up a Muslim boy and six Muslim girls. The emperor revived the practice of converting prisoners of war to Islam. On the other hand, he issued a farman ordering that Muslim prisoners of war were not to be sold to Hindus as slaves. He further encouraged the Islamic practice of forgiving criminals, if they embraced Islam. He made apostasy from Islam and blashphemy against the Prophet or the Quran, punishable with death. He put a Hindu to death for uttering disrespectful language towards the Quran and he executed a Brahman named, Chhaila, who was accused of making use of disrespectful expression towards the Prophet. Although in the later years of his reign some of these regulations were allowed to lapse, yet Shah Jahan's policy proved to be much less generous than that of his father. In fact he lost sight of Akbar's ideal of a "comprehensive state."

Aurangzeb's accession completed the process of reaction. He restored Islam to its original position as the religion of the state and made a sustained attempt to convert India into a Muslim country. First of all, he discontinued the use of the solar Ilahi year and abolished the celebration of the solar new year festivities. Next, he put an end to the practice of Jharokha-Darshan, as it was a Hindu custom and in his eyes smacked of human worship. Next came

the abolition of *tuladan*, followed by discontinuance of the celebration at court of the Hindu festivals, like Desehra, Vasant, and Holi. After the death of Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, the emperor reimposed the *jizia* and pilgrims' tax on the Hindus and ordered the wholesale demolition of temples in all parts of the empire. Then the orders were sent "to the governors of all the provinces that they should destroy the schools and temples of the infidels and put an end to their educational activities as well as the practices of the religion of the kafirs." (*Massir-i-Alamgiri*, p. 81). The result was that universally respected temples, including those of Vishwanath and Gopinath at Banaras, that of Kashavrai at Mathura and many others were razed to the ground. The destruction of their shrines in all parts of the country struck consternation among the Hindus and provoked opposition in some quarters. But Aurangzeb was not deterred and appointed a darogah to supervise the activities of the army officers who were charged with breaking images and destroying temples. Cart-loads of broken images were brought to Delhi and Agra from all the provinces and buried under the staircases of Jami mosques of these and other towns. Sometimes it is supposed that Aurangzeb ordered the demolition of Hindu temples in unfriendly Rajput States only, but this is far from being correct. Most of the temples in the friendly State of Jaipur which never rebelled against him were razed to the ground. (*Massir-i-Alamgiri*, p. 174). Besides, Aurangzeb took steps to reduce the number of Hindus in the public services. He issued a farman for the dismissal of the Hindus from the revenue department which, however, could not be completely enforced on account of the absence of qualified Muslims to take their places. But the 'puritan' emperor took care not to appoint any Hindus to high offices after the death of Jai Singh of Amber and Jaswant Singh of Marwar. He discriminated against the Hindus in the matter of taxation. The Muslims were exempted from the payment of custom duties, while the Hindus were to pay it at the old rate of 5 per cent. The tax on the produce from gardens was levied at 20 per cent from the Hindus and 16.6 per cent from the Muslims. The Hindus paid 5 per cent tax on the sale of their cattle, whereas the Muhammadans were required to pay it only at 2½ per cent. The Hindus were ordered not to look like Muslims in matters of dress and were prohibited, except Rajputs, to ride on Iraqi or Turani horses, elephants or palkis. They were even prohibited from carrying arms in public.

The conversion to Islam was encouraged in diverse ways. The criminals who embraced Islam were acquitted, and government posts were conferred upon the converts who were, besides, rewarded in many other ways. All kinds of pressure was exerted on the Hindu population in order to compel it to embrace Islam. The Islamic law of justice was tightened with a view to compel the non-Muslims to abandon their ancestral religion and embrace Islam. Thus under Aurangzeb the State became a vigorous missionary institution and utilised its power and resources for the propagation of Islam. The policy of religious toleration introduced by Akbar in the 16th century was completely given up by Aurangzeb during the latter half of the 17th century.

The policy of religious intolerance continued to sway the Delhi court under the latter Mughuls until they became tools in the hands of their ministers. Bahadur Shah's government (1707-1711) was harsh and discriminated against the Hindus. The *jizia* and pilgrims' tax continued to be realised. His successor Jahandar Shah followed in his footsteps. Under these two monarchs there was no Hindu of outstanding ability or position at the imperial court. But when Farrukh-Siyar became emperor in 1713 and the Sayyid brothers controlled the policy of his government, the hated *jizia* was abolished. But the pilgrims' tax continued to be realised till the end of the Mughul empire. From Muhammad Shah onwards the rulers of Delhi lived in perpetual fear of the Marathas and could not dream of persecuting their Hindu subjects. It was, therefore, on account of the impotence of the later Mughuls that the principles of Islamic state of Aurangzeb's time were allowed to lapse.

Rajput Policy of the Mughuls.

Babur and Humayun had come into contact with the rulers of Amber and Mewar, and had fought with them, but had not been able to subjudigate them completely. They did not have enough of statesmanship in them to realise the importance of an alliance with the Rajputs and to appreciate the value of their friendship. It was left to Akbar to revolutionise the Mughul policy towards the chiefs of Rajasthan. But Akbar's treatment of the Rajputs was not the outcome of thoughtless sentiments or a more chivalrous regard for their valour, generosity and patriotism. It was the result of a deliberate policy and was based on the principles of enlightened

self-interest, recognition of merit, justice and fair play. As his Muslim nobles and officials had been far from loyal and had rebelled again and again and as the Afghans in the country were the sworn enemies of his royal house, Akbar decided to seek the co-operation of the Rajputs and use them as a counterpoise against his self-seeking Muslim nobles and officials. That was why after fully testing the Rajput loyalty, he entered into a matrimonial alliance with the Kachhawaha ruling family in January 1562 and thereafter he made friendly relations with other Rajput rulers and appointed them to very high posts, such as governors and commanders, in the imperial service. The result was that the Rajputs who had not only stood aloof but had also fought stubbornly against the Turko-Afghan Sultans of Delhi for more than 350 years, became staunch supporters of the Mughul throne and a most effective instrument for the spread of Mughul rule in the country. They contributed freely and richly to the military, political, administrative, economic, social, cultural and artistic achievements of the reign of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan. Their co-operation not only gave security and permanence to the Mughul rule, but also brought about an unprecedented economic prosperity and cultural renaissance in the country, and the synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim culture, which is a priceless legacy of the Mughul rule.

Jahangir continued to follow Akbar's policy of friendly alliance with the Rajputs. It must, however, be admitted that in his time the Rajputs did not enjoy that share in public services which they had enjoyed in the time of Akbar. During Jahangir's reign of 22 years, there were only three Hindu governors of provinces, and these served only for short periods. Nothing is known about the number of Hindu diwans during that reign. The name of only one Hindu diwan, Mohan Das, is mentioned by the chroniclers, and Hawkins informs us that Jahangir preferred to employ Muslims. (Hawkins, Pp. 106-107).

Although after his accession Shah Jahan issued a tall order for the recruitment of only Muslims to the public services, yet he did not take steps to implement it and the Rajputs continued to hold high positions during his reign. According to the calculation of Professor S.R. Sharma, there were 52 Hindus out of a total of 241 who held mansabs of 1,000 to 7,000 during the 31st year of Shah Jahan's reign.

At his accession the number of Hindus holding high positions was small. It can safely be concluded that no dislodgement of the Rajputs and other Hindus from public services took place in the time of Shah Jahan. Besides being governors and high commanders, several Rajputs and other Hindus held high posts in the revenue department. Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur was premier noble of the empire holding the rank of 7,000 and Raja Raghunath was the imperial diwan towards the end of the reign.

But with the accession of Aurangzeb, there was a definite change for the worse in the Mughul policy towards the Rajputs. Being an orthodox Sunni Musalman, he hated the Hindus and particularly the Rajputs who were their leaders and shared power with Muslims in the empire. But for fear of opposition, he took no important steps against them as long as Raja Jai Singh of Amber and Maharaja Jaswant Singh of Marwar were alive. On Jaswant Singh's death in December 1678, the emperor unmasked his policy and made arrangements for the annexation of Marwar to the empire. He imposed the *jizia* on the Hindus and fought with the Rathors and Sisodias with a view to silence their opposition and to reduce their power. In protest against this policy, rebellions broke out in Rajasthan, Bundelkhand, and some other province, and very few Rajputs could be found to serve the emperor with loyalty and devotion. Aurangzeb, therefore, openly preferred Muslims in the state services and dimissed many Hindus. The result was that the Rajputs who had been istrumental in the expansion of the empire, were compelled to become the emperor's inveterate enemies. They withheld their co-operation, fought with the emperor, and remained in rebellion till his death.

Aurangzeb's immediate successors, Bahadur Shah I, Jahandar Shah and Farrukh-Siyar were obliged to fight some of the chiefs of Rajasthan who held a conference at Pushkar and decided not to have any matrimonial alliance with the Mughuls and to throw off their yoke. Even the friendly Raja of Jaipur joined this conference. Such was the consequence of the ruinous policy of Aurangzeb and Bahadur Shah I, that no Rajput chief of importance was left on the side of the Mughuls in their struggle against the Marathas, the Sikhs, the Jats and the foreign invaders like Nadir Shah and Ahmed Shah Abdali. Sometimes the ruler of Jaipur joined the army, but he had really no

heart to put in his best for the defence of the empire. In fact, Raja Jai Singh thought it prudent to have a friendly understanding with Peshwa Baji Rao during the Mughul struggle againt the Marathas.

Some modern writers are of the opinion that if Akbar had not patronised the Rajputs and given them high posts in public services, the Rajput problem would not have arisen, and Aurangzeb and his successors would not have any difficulty in keeping a tight hand over the chiefs of Rajasthan. This view is absolutely erroneous. Had Akbar not secured the support of the Rajputs by a liberal and tolerant policy, the Mughul ruling family would have met with the same fate that successive dynasties of the Sultanate period had met. Moreover, the days of the Sultanate were over and the 16th century was not like the 14th and 15th centuries. It was not possible for any ruler of Delhi of the 16th century, however powerful, to ignore the Rajputs who were fast regaining their lost position in Indian politics. Further, even in politics it was not possible to deceive all people for all times. The Mughuls could not have carried on their administration successfully without the co-operation of the important elements in India's population. The protogonist of the above theory seems to believe in the triumph of brute force irrespective of the circumstances. It cannot appeal itself to those who have an intimate knowledge of the peculiar difficulties, political as well as military, that Akbar had to face when he took the reigns of governments in his hands.

Dakhin Policy of the Mughuls.

The first two Mughul emperors had no leisure to think seriously of conquering the Dakhin. Babur was, no doubt, interested in the affairs of South India and took note of the political developments there, as is clear from his autobiography; but his carrier in India was so short that he could not conquer the whole of northern India even. Humayun's tumultuous career concerned itself with the affairs of northern India. Akbar was the first Mughul Emperor to formulate a concrete scheme of the conquest of the Dakhin after he had established his authority over northern India. In this Akbar only followed the traditional policy of the early rulers of Hindustan such as, the Mauryas, the Guptas, the Khaljis and the Tughluqs. Akbar's Dakhin policy sought to realise two objects, namely, (1) the establishment of an All-India empire with himself at its head, and (2) driving away the Portuguese, who were rising into importance as

a political power, to the sea. Being an imperialist of the type of ancient Indian kings like Chandra Gupta Maurya or Samudra Gupta, Akbar seriously desired the subjugation of the entire sub-continent of India, and therefore, it was his policy to bring the Dakhin Sultanates of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkunda and Khandesh under his suzerainty. His policy was purely imperialistic in origin and outlook and was not influenced by religious considerations.

Anxious to secure a formal ackowledgement of his suzerainty by the sultans of the Dakhin states, Akbar sent in 1591 four embassies to their respective courts. Khandesh accepted the proposal and re-cognised Akbar to be its suzerain, but Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda politely rejected the offer. On the failure of the diplomatic missions, Akbar sought to secure his object by means of force. He sent a large army under prince Murad and Abdur Rahim Khan Khana against Ahmadnagar which was besiged. But the city was gallantly defended by Chand Bibi, the dowager queen of Bijapur and a daughter of the king of Ahmadnagar. Nevertheless, ultimately the king of Ahmadnagar promised to recognise Akbar as emperor and ceded Berar to the empire (1596). The Sultan was, however, persuaded by the party of his nobles to repudiate the treaty and to renew the war. The Mughuls stormed Ahmadnagar and Chand Bibi was either mur-dered or committed suicide (1600). More than half of Ahmadnagar passed into the hands of the emperor, but the entire kingdom could not finally be annexed until the reign of Shah Jahan.

Meanwhile, taking advantage of the resistance offered by Ahmad-nagar the king of Khandesh revolted and Akbar was obliged to march in person to the Dakhin. He captured Burhanpur and acquired the mighty fortress of Asirgarh after a prolonged siege and lavish distribu-tion of money among the garrison. Then he constituted the conquered territories into three subas of Ahmadnagar, Barar and Khandesh and put them under his son Daniyal, who was already incharge of Malwa and Gujarat (1601). Thus the southern frontier of the Mughul empire was pushed from the Narmada to the upper course of the Krishna.

Jahangir pursued the forward policy of his father and endea-voured to conquer the remaining part of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar. So, throughout his reign fighting continued in the Dakhin; but on account of the ability and statesmanship of the Abyssinian Malik

Ambar, who was the prime-minister of Ahmadnagar and an adept in guerrilla warfare and on account of the dissensions among the Mughul commanders, Jahangir failed to capture Ahmadnagar. The emperor first appointed his son Parwez and subsequently prince Khurram to lead the expedition. But Abdur Rahim Khan Khana who was the *de facto* commander, could not properly control the army and betrayed weakness. The Mughuls thus obtained only partial success. In 1616 Khurram captured Ahmadnagar and some other forts and was rewarded with the title of Shah Jahan and promoted to the rank of 30,000 zat and 20,000 sawar. But this success was nominal and the Mughul frontier in the Dakhin remained where it was in 1605.

Shah Jahan on his accession resumed his ancestral policy of expansion which was in his case coloured by religious prejudice, and sent an army to conquer that part of Ahmadnagar kingdom which was still independent. Fortunately, Malik Ambar had died in 1626 and there was dissension between the sultan and his new minister, Fateh Khan, son of Malik Ambar. But the Mughuls failed to capture Parenda, a powerful fortress belonging to Ahmadnagar. Fateh Khan entered into negotiations with the Mughuls and put the sultan Nizam-ul-Mulk death at Shah Jahan's suggestion. He placed Nizam-ul-Mulk's son, Hussain Shah, a boy of ten, on the throne and surrendered the fortress of Daulatabad to the Mughuls (1631) for a huge bribe of ten lakhs and a half of rupees. Ahmadnagar was finally annexed to the Mughul empire in 1633 and its last king, Hussain Shah, was sent a prisoner to the fort of Gwalior. Fateh Khan was employed as a mansabdar in the Mughul service and given a liberal salary.

Shah Jahan now began encroachment on the Shia kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda. This Mughul emperor was actuated by religious zeal as well as by imperialistic considertions and desired the extinction of the two remaining independent Dakhin kingdoms as their rulers were Shias. In 1635, he called upon the sultans to acknowledge his suzerainty and to abstain from helping Shahji Maratha who had set up a Nizam Shahi boy as the nominal sultan of the defunct kingdom of Ahmadnagar. As Shah Jahan prepared to enforce his demand by force, the sultan of Golkunda acknowledged him as his overlord and agreed to strike coins and read Khutba in his name (1636). But as the sultan of Bijapur evaded compliance, his capital was besieged and he was eventually compelled to acknowledge the suzerainty of the

emperor and agreed to pay him tribute (May 1636). Prince Aurangzeb was now appointed governor of the four provinces of the Dakhin—Khandesh, Berar, Telangana, and Daulatabad. He took steps to improve the administration; but had to resign in 1644 owing to the hostility of Dara. He was reappointed to the Dakhin in 1653, and winning over Mir Jumla, he attacked Golkunda in order to annex that kingdom. But Shah Jahan intervened and ordered the prince to raise the siege (March 1656). Golkunda thus got a further lease of life by paying an indemnity of ten lakhs and ceding to the empire the district of Rangir. Next Aurangzeb, invaded Bijapur which was not a vassal state and, therefore, the Mughuls had no right to interfere in its internal affairs. Yet the prince captured Bidar and Kalyan. But Shah Jahan interfered and directed the withdrawal of the imperial forces. A peace was made and Bijapur paid a heavy indemnity and surrendered Bidar, Kalyan and Parenda. The Mughuls made no further progress in the Dakhin during the remaining days of Shah Jahan's reign.

During the first 25 years of his reign, Aurangzeb remained busy in northern India and left the work of the subjugation of Bijapur and Golkunda to his generals. The situation was complicated by the rise of the Marathas under Shivaji. The emperor's generals failed to achieve definite success, either against the two Muslim kingdoms or against the Marathas. Mirza Raja Jai Singh compelled Shivaji to surrender three-fourths of his territories and forts and to pay a visit to Aurangzeb at Agra (1665-66). This in the end produced injurious results for the Mughuls.

After Shivaji's death, Aurangzeb proceeded to the Dakhin to prevent an alliance between his fugitive son Akbar and the new Maratha king, Shambhuji. The emperor spent four years in unsuccessful attempts to seize Akbar and to put down the Marathas. Then he turned his attention against Bijapur and Golkunda. Aurangzeb's policy, like his father's, was influenced partly by imperial interests and partly by religious considerations. Being a staunch Sunni he wanted to extirpate Shiaism from the Dakhin. He besieged Bijapur which was compelled to capitulate in September 1686. It was annexed and sultan Sikandar was taken a prisoner. Then came the turn of Golkunda which too fell after a severe struggle. An Afghan, named Abdulla Pani, accepted a huge bribe from the

emperor and opened the main gate of the fort to the Mughuls to enter it. Golkunda was annexed in September 1687, and its last ruler, Abul Hasan, was sent a prisoner to Daulatabad on a pension of Rs. 50,000/- a year.

Aurangzeb now concentrated his attention against the Marathas. At first, he succeeded, and the Maratha king, Shambhuji, was captured and executed in March, 1689. The Maratha capital Raigarh was occupied and Shambhuji's successor, Raja Ram, had to flee to Karnatak. It seemed as if Aurangzeb had at last realised the ambition of his forefathers by extending his conquest further south and levying tributes from the Hindu States of Tanjor and Trichanapoly. The year 1690 thus marked the zenith of the Mughul power in India. "All seemed to have been gained by Aurangzeb now; but in reality all was lost. It was the beginning of his end. The saddest and most hopeless chapter of his life was now opened." The Marathas recovered themselves and commenced a people's war which exhausted Aurangzeb's treasury and compelled him to be on the defensive. He was worn out by the endless war and fatigue, and died in March 1707. His Dakhin policy far from bringing him any gain became a potent cause of the downfall of his empire.

The Central Asian Policy of the Mughuls.

The Mughuls came from Trans-Oxiana in Central Asia. It was, therefore, the ambition of the early rulers of this dynasty to recover their ancestral patrimony and to rule over it. Babur was desirous of making a last attempt to recover Samarqand, the capital of his great ancestor Timur, after consolidating his position in northern India; but he found no leisure from his Indian engagements to undertaken the expedition. His life was cut short by a premature death in 1530. Humayun had the same ambition, but he lacked strength of character and force of will to take a concrete step in that direction. Akbar, though fired by the same ambition, found no time to conquer his ancestral homeland in Central Asia. An easy-loving ruler like Jahangir did not possess the guts for a hazardous enterprise beyond the Hindukush. His son and successor Shah Jahan, however, had ambition and energy to make a bid for the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshan as a preliminary to his main objective of the acquisition of Samarqand. "Ever since the beginning of his reign," writes Abdur Hamid Lahauri, "the emperor's heart

had been set upon the conquest of Balkh and Badakhshan, which were hereditary territories of his house, and the keys to the conquest of Samarqand, the home and capital of his great ancestor Timur." In 1646, he found an opportunity to interfere in the affairs of the Uzbeg ruler of Turkistan. There was a civil war in that region and Shah Jahan directed Prince Murad to occupy Balkh and Badakhshan which lay between the Hindukush and the Oxus. These were captured. It was, however, found difficult to consolidate his conquest. Accustomed to a life of ease Murad abandoned his charge and returned to Delhi. The emperor disgraced him and despatched Wazir Saadulla Khan to Balkh to set things right. Next, Aurangzeb was sent with a large army. But the Uzbegs organised a national resistance and although Aurangzeb defeated them under their leader Nazar Muhammad in a pitched battle, he had to retreat, abandoning Balkh. The Mughul army suffered terrible hardships. Shah Jahan's Central Asian conquests were abandoned. The expeditions cost the Mughul empire an immense loss of men and money. "Thus ended Shah Jahan's fatuous war in Balkh—a war in which the Indian treasury spent four crores of rupees in two years and realised from the conquered country a revenue of 22½ lakhs only. Not an inch of territory was annexed, no dynasty changed, and no enemy replaced by an ally on the throne of Balkh. The grain stored in the Balkh fort, worth five lakhs and the provisions in other forts as well, were all abandoned to the Bukharians, besides Rs. 50,000/- in cash presented to Nazar Muhammad's grand sons, and Rs. 22,500/- to envoys. 50,000 soldiers fell in battle and ten times that number (including camp followers) were slain by cold and snow on the mountains. Such is the terrible price that aggressive imperialism makes India pay for war across the North-Western Frontier." (Sarkar, *Aurangzeb*, Vol., I, 3rd ed. Pp. 99-100).

Thereafter Mughul emperors gave up their dream of the conquest of Central Asia. Aurangzeb had no such ambition and his successors were too weak to think of it.

North-West Frontier Policy.

Except for a few years (1545-1554) under the Surs, from 1526, the date of the establishment of the Mughul empire in this land, to 1739 Afghanistan was a part of India. Therefore, the tribal region between Afghanistan and India, known as North-West Frontier

Province in our time, formed a part of the Mughul empire. This region has all along occupied a position of strategic as well as economic importance. The rulers of India through the ages have consequently tried to maintain an effective control over it. The Hindukush Range which separates Central Asia from southern Afghanistan, Baluchistan and India is very low in the north of Herat and permits a passage to an invader from Persia or Central Asia to the Kabul Valley and India. The Mughul emperors were, therefore, required to keep an eye on this vulnerable point so as to prevent an invader from Central Asia or Persia to enter Kabul and India. Secondly, it was equally necessary for them to hold possession of the impregnable fortress of Kandhar without which the Mughul empire in India could not be safe. Kandhar, situated as it is in a highly strategic place, was the first line of India's defence in that age. Moreover, it was a great centre of trade and was frequented by merchants from various parts of Asia for the exchange of commercial commodities. Thirdly, although the modern North-West Frontier region was nominally under the suzerainty of the Mughuls, it was really independent and the Mughuls found it necessary to control the turbulant tribes, such as, the Yusufzais, the Khattaks, the Mohmonds, the Uzbegs and others, who were "very dangerous in their native hills, being democratic to a degree and fanatically attached to their liberty. Fighting in the fastnesses of their country which afford the best of natural defences, they.....ever resisted any attempt to bring them into subjugation by any of the adjoining monarchs."

Before he became master of northern India, Babur had occupied the fortress of Kandhar and made proper arrangements for guarding the vulnerable point of the Hindukush Range, north of Herat. This he provided for the safety of Afghanistan and Hindustan from an external aggression. This arrangement continued in the time of Humayun as well, although Afghanistan and the Panjab including the frontier region, were made over to Kamran. But neither Babur nor Humayun evolved a scientific policy towards the tribes in the North-West Frontier. Nevertheless, the tribesmen must have been kept under an effective control, for there was hardly any tribal rising during their reigns. Akbar followed the same policy in regard to the defence of the Hindukush region and recovered Kandhar which had been lost, from the Shah of Persia. He took steps to suppress the turbulance of the Uzbegs and obliged their

leader, Abdulla Khan, to remain friendly to the Mughul empire. But there was a fearful rising of the tribes in the North-Western Frontier, known as the Raushniya rising. The Raushniyas were the followers of one Bayazid who preached a special form of Islam and hostility to non-Muslims. The Raushniyas were against the authority of the Mughul emperor. Akbar, realising the importance of effectively guarding the frontier, despatched an army to put down the Raushniya lawlessness. Next, he sent Raja Todar Mal to fight the Yusufzais who had joined hands with the Raushniyas. They were defeated and a large number of them were killed. The frontier territory of Swat, Bajaur and Buner was cleared of the rebels. The tribal rising convinced Akbar of the necessity of taking further steps to round off the North-Western Frontier by conquering and annexing Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan and acquiring Kandhar. Thus the North-Western Frontier was made secure.

The frontier was weakened under Jahangir on account of the loss of Kandhar. This important fortress with its adjoining territory was a bone of contention between the Mughuls and the Persians. Shah Abbas (1587-1629) besieged Kandhar in 1621 and captured it in June 1622. Jahangir with all his military preparations failed to recover it.

Shah Jahan realised that with the province of Kandhar out of the empire, the Mughul position on the North-West Frontier was sure to be weakened, and therefore, he managed to recover that fortress by diplomacy. Ali Mardan Khan, the Persian governor of Kandhar, surrendered the valuable fortress to Shah Jahan and was rewarded with rich presents and high honours. Shah Abbas II of Persia unable to bear the humiliation made preparations in August 1648 to attack Kandhar during winter, when on account of the snow fall it was difficult for Shah Jahan to send reinforcement to the governor of that fortress. The Mughul garrison capitulated in February 1648 and Kandhar once again passed into the hands of the Shah. Shah Jahan made three unsuccessful attempts to recover it. The first attempt was made in 1649 under Prince Aurangzeb. The second siege of Kandhar was undertaken three years later, again under Aurangzeb and Sadullah Khan, while the emperor himself proceeded to Kabul so as to exert pressure by his near presence. A third attempt was made in 1653 under Dara, but it too failed. These

three expeditions cost over 12 crores of rupees, besides countless lives. The military and political prestige of the Mughul empire was, therefore, considerably affected.

Aurangzeb made no attempt to recover Kandhar. Nevertheless, inspite of his being an orthodox Musalman, anxious not to shed the blood of brother Muslims, he was obliged on account of political and economic considerations to follow the forward policy on the North-Western Frontier, as the turbulant Muslim tribes of that region would not submit tamely to the Mughul domination and were a source of great anxiety to the emperor and his government. The tribesmen indulged in highway robbery and plundered the rich towns of the north-western Panjab. Aurangzeb tried to win them over by payments of subsidies so as to keep the north-western passes open to peaceful traffic and trade. But the hardy tribesmen, whose number was ever on the increase, were not content with 'political pensions' and one of these—the Yusufzais—rose in rebellion under their leader, Bhagu, in 1667. They crossed the Indus near Attock and invaded the Hazara district. Another band of the Yusufzais issued out of the hills and ravaged the western Peshawar and Attock districts. But the Yusufzais were suppressed within a few months. In 1672 the Afridis rose in arms under their chieftain Akmal Khan, who adopted the title of king and appealed to all the Pathans to join in a national war against the Mughuls. The Afridis defeated a Mughul army under Muhammad Amin Khan at Ali Masjid with great slaughter, and acquired a considerable booty. This success raised the prestige and ambition of Akmal Khan and led to a wide-spread rebellion of the tribesmen from Attock to Kandhar. The Khattaks joined the Afridis and Khushal Khan, the leader of the Khattaks and a poet and hero of note "became the leading spirit of the national rising and inspired the tribesmen with his pen and sword alike." In 1674 the tribesmen defeated and killed an imperial officer, named, Shujat Khan and the remnant of the Mughul force had to be rescued by Jaswant Singh Rathor.

By the middle of 1674, the situation had become so menacing that Aurangzeb was obliged to proceed in person to Hasan Abdal near Peshawar in July of that year so as to overawe the Pathans. By a clever policy of diplomacy and force, he bought over several important Pathan chieftains. He gave them presents, pensions and jagirs

and forced those of them to submission as were found refractory. The emperor appointed Amin Khan governor of Afghanistan, and this capable officer followed a conciliatory policy towards the tribesmen and was able to keep them in check. Like his predecessors, Aurangzeb managed to keep peace in the North-West Frontier by paying subsidies to the tribal chiefs of the areas and by playing one clan against another. But the Khattak leader, Khushal Khan continued to be in rebellion till he was betrayed by his own son. He was thrown into prison to die there.

The policy of bribing the tribal chiefs in order to keep the passes open to peaceful traffic was continued by Aurangzeb's successors as long as Afghanistan remained a part of the Mughul empire. In 1739 Nadir Shah's occupation of Afghanistan pushed back India's frontier to the river Indus and gave an opportunity to the tribes of the region between India and Afghanistan to regain their independence.

Book for Further Reading

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CHAPTER XIII

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

The Country and the People.

India of the Mughul period was very much like that of to day. There were, of course, no railways, nor the canal systems of the Panjab and the modern Uttar Pradesh. There were no metalled roads. The various parts of the country and most of the important towns were connected by *kucha* roads, shaded by trees on either sides of them and clearly demarcated by sarais meant for merchants and travellers to spend the nights in security. Agra, which was for a considerable time the capital, was well-connected with the rest of the country. The Grand Trunk Road connected it with Dacca in the east and Kabul in the north-west. This great road passed through Patna, Allahabad, Banaras, Agra, Mathura, Delhi, Lahore and Attock and reached Kabul. Another road started from Agra and extended as far as Asirgarh. The main towns along this road were, besides, Agra, Dholpur, Gwalior, Jodhpur, Sirohi, Ajmer and Asirgarh. A third important road ran from Agra to Ahmadabad. Another importa t road connected Lahore with Multan. Navigable rivers, such as, the Indus, the Ganga, the Yamuna, the Ghaghra and the rivers of Bangal were frequently used for traffic and transport of troops and goods. There were more forests during the Mughul period than now. This was prticularly the case in the districts of Gorakhpur, Gonda, Lakhimpur-Kheri and Bijnor in the Uttar Pradesh, and in several parts of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. Wild animals were seen even in some parts of the Gangetic plain. Elephants were common in the country south of the Ganga and the Yamuna and lions and tigers could be shot in some parts of Malwa. Apart from these, the general aspects of the country did not materially differ from that of today. The country-side were dotted with numerous villages, standing close to one another and full of people. The modern towns of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kanpur and Karachi had not come into existence. Ancient capitals like Kanauj and Vijaynagar were in a state of decay. The more

flourishing cities were Fatehpur Sikri, Agra, Delhi, Allahabad, Banaras, Multan, Lahore, Ujjain, Ahmadabad, Ajmer, Patna, Rajmahal and Dacca. All these were very populous and prosperous. Large gardens were found in all parts of the country, particularly in the vicinity of big towns. Not only the country-side but also the towns looked beautiful from a distance.

The density of the population was much less than today. The population was not homogeneous. The Hindus, of course, formed the great majority and were divided into castes. They included the Jains, the Buddhists and the Sikhs among them. The upper classes of them belonged mostly to the Rajput, Brahman, Kayasth and Vaish castes and did not inter-dine or inter-marry among themselves. The caste system was much more rigorous than in our time. The Rajputs, as a rule, were military men and their tribal leaders were rulers of territories and held high ranks as mansabdars in the imperial service. The Brahmans were engaged in priestly profession or that of teaching and some, though a small number, like Gujarati Nagars, took to the study of Persian and were employed as officers. Under the later Mughuls, a few members of this class (Nagar) figured even as governors of provinces. The Vaish formed the mercantile community; Kayasthas were engaged largely as clerks, secretaries (munshis) and revenue officers. Some of the lower caste Hindus, notably in Bengal and certain other parts, had been converted into Islam and some high castes in the Panjab and Kashmir had, in the same manner, been compelled to abandon their ancestral religion. Several new sub-castes had come into existence during this period, such as, the Kazi, the Toshkhani and Agha sub-castes among the Brahmans of Kashmir, Munshis among those of Gujarat, Qanungo and Raizada among the Kayasthas, and Bakhshis and Mehtas among the first three higher castes in several parts of the country. The caste system, though it divided the Hindu society into compartments, furnished the means of corporate organisation. It supervised the morals of its members.

The Muhammadans were sharply divided into two sections, namely, (1) those who had come for employment or trade from Arabia, Persia and other countries and (2) those who were converts from the indigenous Hindu population or descendants of early converts. The number of the latter class was naturally fairly large.

The foreign Muhammadan traders from Arabia and Persia had established their settlements at the sea-ports. Those who had come for service were found mostly in northern India and a smaller number at the courts of Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golkunda. Foreign Muslims predominated at the Mughul court. Besides the Arabs, the Persians, the Turks, the Mongolians and the Uzbegs, there were some Abyssinians and Armenians. All these Muslims, whether Indian or foreign, were divided into Sunnis, the Shias, the Bohras and the Khojas by their religious beliefs. The Sunnis formed a great majority of the Muslim population. Quarrels among the Sunni and Sh'as and other sub-divisions of Islam were not uncommon. Racially the Muslims were divided as Turks, Afghans, Persians, Sayyids and Indians. Among the Indian Muslims many still retained their class affinities with the corresponding groups in Hinduism from wh'ch they had sprung, As the country was open to foreign adventures there was no check on emigration and men of many nationalities from Europe and Asia, such as the Portuguese, the English, the Chinese, the Turkish and the Jewish people were found in the country. The Parsis who had found refuge in the country several centuries before, were mainly agriculturists in the time of Akbar and Jahangir, and had begun in the time of Shah Jahan to take to commerce. As regards the Europeans, only Portuguese held important position and they were master of Goa and some other places on our western coast. They also possessed trading centres at the mouth of the Indus and the Ganga.

Religious beliefs and practices.

Although there were several other religious communities, such as, the Parsis in Gujarat and Bombay, Christians on our West Coast, especially in Cochin-Travancore, and the foreign European trading communities in several parts of the country, the sub-continent was mainly peopled by the indigenous Hindus and Indian and foreign Muslims, who were found living side by side and working together at the Mughul court, in the camp and the public offices. Islam invariably aspires for the conquest and the extermination of the indigenous religion and culture of the country it invades, and as a preliminary step brings about an eternal difference between the Muslims and non-Muslims by declaring the latter as Zimmis or 'protected labourers' without rights of full citizenship enjoyed by the Muslims. In India it failed in its main objects, but

succeeded in destroying our homogeneity and creating a permanent gulf between the Muslims (faithful) and the Hindus (kafirs). The religious toleration granted by Akbar was stoutly opposed by the rank and file of the Muslim population and in spite of the complaisant attitude of the Hindus, antagonism between the two major communities continued to exist throughout the Mughul period. The Muslims conscious of their dominant position, were generally arrogant and hostile to the Hindu religious beliefs and way of life. The Hindus were aware of their political weakness, but resented in their hearts the treatment accorded to them by Muslims whom they considered 'unclean.' The Muslims dubbed the Hindus '*kafirs*' and the latter retaliated by calling the Muslims '*malekchha*' or untouchables.

Among the Hindus were included the Jains and the Sikhs. Although Hinduism throughout its history believed in the unity of all-pervading and omnipotent God, image worship was common during the Mughul age, and costly temples, dedicated to various deities, were built in many parts of the country during the tolerant reigns of Akbar and Jahangir. Vaishnavism and the *bhakti* cult, both of Rama and Krishna, swayed millions of our forbearers of this age. Many saints and reformers were born to address moral appeals to the masses and the classes alike. Abstemious in food, drink and dress, the generality of the Hindus led pure, plain and frugal lives, observed fasts for many days in the year, performed pilgrimage to their holy places and practised charity. They looked upon it a religious duty to spend a part of their income for relieving human distress, irrespective of caste or creed. They revered the Ganga, the Yamuna and other rivers and visited saints.

The Musalmans, though opposed to idolatry, revered tombs and many among them observed '*tazia*,' and worshipped the local Hindu deities in the rural areas. Worship of saints and faqirs was very much in vogue.

The society was demoralised by the existence of slavery. Eunuchs were freely bought and sold, and although Akbar had prohibited it, the prisoners of war were similarly converted into slaves and compelled to embrace Islam. Superstitions, belief in omens, and astrology were common among the Hindus and the Muslims alike. Belief in alchemy, charms, amulets and many such instru-

ments of divine favour was a feature of the religious life of all classes of people during the Mughul age.

Dress, Toilet and Ornaments.

The dress of our upper and middle classes consisted of a large coat, tight trousers and a turban. Hindus, whether rich or poor, wore turbans. Many added a white silk or cotton scarf tied about their waist and slung down the leg and another scarf placed on their shoulders. The common people contented themselves with a *dhoti* wrapped round their waist, while poor Muhammadans put on pyjama and a long shirt. The Mughul emperors used gorgeously rich clothes surmounted by a turban decorated with jewels. The Hindus fastened the strings of their coat on the left side, while the Muhammadans tied them on their right side. Hindu women put on saries, while Muslim women dressed in long pyjamas or *ghagras* and jackets and covered their heads with a piece of cloth. In the North-Western parts of the country *kulahs* and Kashmiri caps were common. Stockings were not used, but most people put on shoes of various shapes and designs. A kind of soap made of pulses, flour-powder or soap berry was used for toileting. Hair dye and recipes for the cure of baldness and the removal of hair from the body were known. Various kinds of pastes, specially those made of sandal wood, were used by our women. The women dyed their hands and feet red and used chlorium in their eyes. *Pan* served the purpose of lip-stick of our times. Perfumes and oils were indispensable. Ornaments were as much prized by ladies of the Mughul period as they are today. Personal hygiene had become the rule of conduct to be observed every morning. It included tooth brushing with a *datun*, eye and mouth washing, rubbing, kneading, shampooing, annointing the body with perfume, bathing, using chlorium for the eyes and also face powders and betal-eating.

The common folk, Hindus and Muslims ate essentially the same food, except meat, which Muslims enjoyed, while many Hindus did not. But it will be a mistake to suppose that Hindus in general abhorred meat. Only Jains and most Brahmans and Vaish in Madras, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Central India avoided flesh diet. The Hindu masses were vegetarians from habit and economic necessity. The Mughul kings like Akbar and Jahangir forbade the slaughter of animals and birds on certain days in the year.

and themselves abstained from meat-eating on those days. The upper class people were fond of rich dishes which consisted of many varieties of meat, *pulao* and other rich preparations. Wine, as a rule, was not served, for it was forbidden for Muslims. Fruits were eaten by upper and middle class people. Pickle and *achars* were also common. The vegetarian dishes of the Hindus consisted of butter, pulses, vegetables, rice and loaves of bread, called *chapatis*. Cleanliness in the Hindu kitchens was a religious duty. The Hindus abstained from eating cooked things from the market. Muhammadans used china, glass and earthen utensils and the Hindus those of copper and silver according to their position. The Hindus would wash their mouths, hands and feet before and after dinner.

Despite religious prohibition, wine drinking was common among upper class Muslims and many died of delirium tremens. The Rajputs took opium, besides wine. Many Hindus were addicted to *bhang*. The use of tobacco became increasingly popular since the reign of Jahangir.

Amusements.

Our countrymen of the Mughul period were found of games and sports. The chess, chaupar, playing-cards, games of guties called tiger play of various types were common with our upper and middle class people of both sexes. Outdoor diversions, such as, hunting, animal fights and *chaugan* (polo) were the privilege of the few. The polo was played in water and also during the night with ignited balls. The wrestling and juggler's feats and magic shows were enjoyed by all. Kite flying, mock fights, blind men's buff, climbing on trees and other pastimes were equally popular. The nautch parties were special hobbies of our upper and middle class people in all parts of the country. Women in the harems of the rich, enjoyed dance and dramatic shows and listened to stories of love and adventure.

Hunting was an important source of amusement and was frequently indulged in by Mughul rulers. Akbar invented a special kind of hunting called *kamargha*, which became highly popular. In this game, animals were driven ordinarily from an area of 40 *kos* from every direction by a large number of beaters and the ring was gradually tightened till it became so narrow as to enable

the emperor to shoot the game from the back of an elephant. Elephant catching and tiger hunting were the privileges of the emperor. Boating was also an interesting pastime, and there were many pleasure boats attached to the court. Story-telling, music and song afforded delight to the rich. Gardening was also a hobby with the kings and nobles and other well to-do people.

Fairs and Festivals.

Public fairs and festivals afforded opportunities of meeting friends and relations and of diversion from the monotonous duties of life. There were a large number of fairs and festivals both for Hindus and Muslims. The Mughul court gave an opportunity to the public to witness gorgeous displays several times in the year. On the occasions of Nau-roz (Persian New Year's Day), the birthdays of the emperor, of the princes and the anniversary of his accession and the celebration of the festivals like Dasehra, Vasant and Dipawali (except in the time of Aurangzeb) and Muslim festivals like the two Ids, the Shab-i-barat and Bara Wafat, the court and the palace were gaily decorated and special darbars and dinners and other entertainments were held. Sometimes fancy bazars were held, and women from rich and noble families visited them for enjoyment and fun. Religious festivals and fairs of the Hindus and Musalmans were too many to be enumerated. They were much the same as in our days. Periodical fairs were held at many seats of Hindu pilgrimage, such as, Hardwar, Prayag, Ayodhya, Mathura, Gurhmukteshwar, Nimsar, Gaya, Kurukshetra, Ujjain and many other places and were largely attended by men, women and children. As they served religious and social purposes they were very popular. In every important town local fairs were held. The places of Muslim pilgrimage and fairs were Ajmer, Panipat, Sarhind, Ajodhan etc., which attracted a large number of pilgrims from every part of the country.

Position of women.

Unlike in the ancient Hindu period our women of the Mughul age did not enjoy a high position in society. Pardah and child marriage had become common on account of the influence of Islam and the conduct of Muslim rulers and nobles. Except those of the lower classes, Hindu women did not move out of their houses. The Muslims observed purdah much more strictly than the Hindus.

The birth of a daughter was considered inauspicious, while that of a son was an occasion for rejoicing. On account of early marriage, there were many widows in our society and they were not allowed to remarry. Polygamy was common among Musalmans who could, according to Sunni tradition, marry four wives at a time. A Shia could marry many more than four. There was no divorce among the Hindus, while it was permitted both for Muslim men and women. Although Hinduism did not prohibit polygamy, monogamy was the rule with the Hindus on account of habit and economic necessity; rarely did a man of average means and status marry more than one wife. Only Hindu ruling classes indulged in this pastime. In spite of these handicaps, women exercised great influence at home and some of them helped their husbands in their avocations. There were many Hindu women of outstanding ability during this period, notably Rani Durgawati of Gondwana (who was a brave soldier and a capable administrator), Rani Karmvati, Mira Bai, Tara Bai etc. Among the Muslims Nur Jahan, Mumtaz Mahal, Chand Bibi, Jahanara, Raushanara, Zebunnisa, and Shahibji (wife of Amin Khan, governor of Kabul) played an important part in the affairs of that time.

Agriculture and Industry.

Agriculture provided the means of livelihood to a vast majority of the people. It was carried on much in the same manner as today. Besides the usual crops, such as, wheat, barley, gram, peas and oil-seeds, sugarcane, indigo and poppy were cultivated in many parts of the country. There was localisation of crops. Sugarcane was cultivated in many parts of modern Uttar Pradesh, Bangal and Bihar, and indigo in many places in northern and southern India. Cotton was produced in most places. Agricultural implements and tools were the same as now. Artificial irrigation, however, was absent in the Mughul period and the peasants watered their fields from tanks or wells. Nevertheless the country was self-sufficient in agricultural products. Among the non-agricultural products, fisheries, minerals, salt, opium and liquor were important. Gold was found in Kumaun and the mountains and rivers of the Panjab. Iron was found in many parts of the country and extensively used for making tools, arms etc. Copper mines existed in Rajasthan and Central India. Red stone quarries existed at Fatehpur Sikri and at many places in Rajasthan. Yellow stone was found in Thatta and marble

in Jaipur and Jodhpur. Diamond mines of Golkunda were famous and diamonds were also obtained from Chota Nagpur. Salt came from the Sambhar Lake and the hills of the Panjab and was also manufactured from sea and lake water in Gujarat and Sind. Opium was extensively cultivated in Malwa and Bihar and liquor was made almost everywhere. Saltpetre was also manufactured and was much in demand for munition.

The most important industry was cultivation of cotton and manufacture of cotton cloth. Cotton industry was known to every village and cotton cloth for local use was produced all over the country. But Agra, Banaras, Jaunpur, Patna, Burhanpur, Lucknow, Khairabad and many other places in Bidar, Bangal, Bihar and Malwa were famous for their fine goods. Subsidiary dyeing industry flourished side by side with the cotton industry. Edward Terry was struck with beautiful and fast dyes produced in the country. Gold cloth was manufactured at Ayodhya (Faizabad) and in Khandesh; Dacca and some other places in Bangal were famous for silk cloth, fine muslins and mattresses. In Multan were manufactured beautiful flowery carpets and Kashmir was famous for its woollen carpets and other silk and woollen goods. Jahangir established woollen carpet and shawl industry at Amritsar. Embroidery was manufactured in the Panjab, Uttar Pradesh and some other provinces. Printed cloth was produced in Berar, Sirong, Burhanpur, Ahmadabad and Agra. Carpets were manufactured at Fatehpur Sikri, Alwar and Jaunpur. Sialkot in the Panjab was famous for the manufacture of tents. The state encouraged the manufacture of goods of various kinds on a large scale, and there were attached to the court many workshops or *karkhanas* in which many hundreds of men were employed.

Weapons of offence and defence were manufactured all over the country. But most important centres of the industry were in the Fanjab and Gujarat. Swords manufactured at Somnath were prized throughout the country. Perfumed oil of Jaunpur and Gujarat and rose-water from Delhi were much in demand at the imperial and provincial courts. Paper was manufactured at Sialkot, Gaya and in Kashmir. Bidar produced ornamental silver and gold wares and there were glass works at Fatehpur Sikri and in Berar. Kheora in the Panjab was famous for articles made of rock-salt. Pearl fishery

flourished in southern India and articles of wood and leather were produced everywhere. Utility articles of various kinds, brass utensils, pottery, bricks, mills for grinding corn and other articles of everyday use were manufactured for local use all over the country. The country was self-supporting in most of the articles of common use.

Trade.

There was a brisk trade with many countries of Asia and Europe. Ceylon, Burma, China, Japan, the East Indies, Nepal, Persia, Central Asia, Arabia, the Red-Sea ports and East Africa were commercially connected with our country during the Mughul period. The Portuguese, the Dutch, the English and the French took our goods to European markets. The chief exports were textiles, specially various kinds of cotton fabrics. Indian cloth was in great demand in Europe and many countries of Asia. Other articles of export were, pepper, indigo, opium, saltpetre, spices, sugar, silk, salt, beads, borax, tumeric, lac, sealing wax, asafoetida (*hing*), drugs of various kinds and miscellaneous goods. The chief imports from foreign countries were bullion, horses, metals, silk, ivory, coral, ambar, precious stones, silk-cloth, velvet, brocade, broad cloth, perfumes, drugs, China goods specially porcelain, African, slaves and European wines. Curious and rare articles were much in demand at the imperial and the provincial courts. Glass vessels were also imported from abroad, probably from Venice.

Besides providing for the need of the people in the land, the country supplied cotton-cloth of many varieties to Africa, Arabia, Egypt, Burma, Malacca, the Straits and several other countries of Asia. Our cotton goods were transported to Italy, France, England and Germany where they were very much in demand. The principal outlets for foreign sea-borne trade were Cambay, Surat, Baroach, Lahri Bandar, Bassein, Chaul, Goa, Calicut, Cochin, Negapatam, Masulipatam and Satgaon. On the land trade followed two routes; from Lahore to Kabul and beyond, and from Multan to Kandhar and beyond. The State charged low custom duties. As Surat 3½ per cent duties were charged on all exports and 2 per cent on gold and silver. The balance of trade was invariably in our favour. The chief market towns of the empire from where articles of imports were distributed and articles of export found their way for being sent abroad, were

Lahore, Multan, Lahri Bandar (Sind), Cambay, Ahmadabad, Surat, Chattagaon, Patna and Agra.

Economic System.

An important factor in the economic system of the Mughul period was a wide gulf separating producers from consumers. The producers were agriculturists, industrial workers and the traders, and the consuming classes, the nobles and officers of the civil and military departments, professional and religious classes, servants, slaves and beggars. Another important feature was the superfluity of officers and domestic servants. It was a fashion for the rich people to be surrounded by a crowd of retainers and menial servants. There was a large number of religious mendicants and beggars, both Hindus and Muslims, who performed no useful function, and consequently a large portion of the State income was wasted, the cost of which had to be borne by the producing classes. The nobles and officers were paid very high salaries and they spent lavishly on articles of luxury and display. They were fond of sumptuous dishes, costly dresses, precious jewellery, elephants and horses. The well-to-do spent extravagant sums on marriages of their sons and daughters, on buildings, mausoleums, and mosques and on curious purchased from foreign countries. The extravagant living landed many of them into debt and compelled them to extort money from the peasantry. The middle class people, consisting of professional classes and ordinary state employees, were fairly well off. The upper and middle class merchants were also economically prosperous. Skilled workmen earned sufficient to lead a decent life, but the condition of the unskilled workers, peons, and shop-keepers was not good. They were paid low wages, and had to put up with ill-treatment. The lower class people were poor and were denied even ordinary comfort of life. They resided in mud houses, as now, toiled all day long and had very few belongings.

The conditions of the peasantry, unskilled workers, menial servants and low shop-keepers progressively deteriorated from the time of Akbar to that of Aurangzeb and became very bad indeed during the days of the later Mughul emperors. During the reign of Aurangzeb agriculture, industry and trade were badly affected by his incessant wars and the inefficieny of the administration. "Thus ensued," observes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "the great economic impcvrishment of India—not only a decrease of the 'national stock', but also a rapid

lowering of mechanical skill and standard of civilization, a disappearance of art and culture over wide tracts of the country." After that emperor's death, the economic system broke down almost completely consequent on the break up of the empire and the establishment of the provincial dynasties in several parts of the country. The weakness of the central government, the Maratha ravages, the foreign invasions of Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, the piracy of the Portuguese and abuse of the trade privileges by the European traders and their agents caused economic distress to a vast majority of the people. Thus at the time when the country passed under the alien sway of the English East India Company it presented a low economic state of affairs with more than half the population leading a miserable life.

Prices.

During the Mughul period things of daily use, such as, grain, vegetable, fruit, milk, ghee, oil, meat and fish and articles of clothing were very cheap. During the reign of Akbar the normal rate of wheat was 12 maunds a rupee, that of barley 18 maunds, best rice 10 maunds, moong 18 maunds, mash 16 maunds. A sheep could be had for a rupee and a half. Meat sold 17 seers a rupee, and milk 44 seers. Daily wages of workers were also low. An unskilled labourer was paid 2 dams a day, i.e., one twentieth of a rupee, a carpenter got 7 dams and other skilled workmen too got 7 dams a day. The prices did not much differ during the reigns of Akbar's successors except in the time of war or a famine when for a temporary period things became very dear indeed. Otherwise, generally speaking, the prices of things throughout the Mughul period remained low. The effect of all round cheapness and low prices was that the common man got his means of subsistence without difficulty. The historian Smith is of opinion that " the hired landless labourer in the time of Akbar and Jahangir had probably more to eat than he has now." On the other hand, Moreland thinks, that, "Speaking generally the masses lived on the same economic plane as now." The truth seems to be that although the income of the common man during the Mughul period was not high, he did not suffer from starvation. Nor did he feel the pinch for want of corn and other necessities of life, which were plentiful and cheap. Moreover, the common man had fewer needs and more of contentment than his successors of our time. He was more honest and led a more contented and purer life than his representative of the twentieth century.

Famines.

As crops in our country depend upon rain-fall, the failure of seasonal rains is invariably followed by a famine. The north-western India suffered from a severe famine in 1555-56, *i.e.*, the first year of Akbar's reign. It was accompanied by a pestilence which took a heavy toll of human life. Another famine occurred in Gujarat in 1573-74, and still another in Kashmir in 1595-96. Bangal was visited by famine in 1575. Horrible famines occurred in the Dakhin and Gujarat in 1630-32. The outbreak of a number of famines was recorded during the reign of Aurangzeb, but these did not seem to have been severe. The Mughul emperors from Akbar downwards followed the policy of trying to relieve the distress of the people as much as they could. They sanctioned relief-work, disbursed large sums on it and remitted revenue in the affected areas. But in view of the magnitude of the problem and inefficiency of the administration the famine problem could not be tackled successfully by the Mughuls.

Education.

The Mughul government did not consider it to be its duty to educate the people. It had no department of education and did not allocate a portion of the public revenue for the spread of literacy. Akbar, however, made an attempt to encourage education and opened a number of primary and secondary schools and even colleges. He reformed the curriculum and included certain important subjects in the courses of study, such as, science of morals, social behaviour, arithmetic, agriculture, mensuration, geometry, astronomy, physiognomy, foretelling, household economy, public administration, medicine, logic, history, etc. Except in Sanskrit and Hindi schools, the medium of instruction was made Prsian. His policy was continued by his successors. Although there is no evidence to show that all the Mughul emperors took the same degree of interest in the state schools established by Akbar, yet it seems that until the decline of the empire many of these were subsidized by the state and allowed to function. But the number of state schools was small and they were not meant for the education of the public; nor did it provide any aid to the schools established by private agency. Education was thus in Mughul India a private affair, a hand-maid of religion, and if the Mughuls took interest in it, it was to earn religious merit and not to advance the welfare of the people.

The public made their own arrangements for the education of their children and considering the age and circumstances of the time, the arrangements were fairly satisfactory. " There is no country," writes F.W. Thomas, " where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful influence. From the simple poets of the vedic age to the Bangali philosopher (Tagore) of the present day, there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars." Private schools existed in almost every village and a school was almost invariably attached to every temple or mosque. The Hindus introduced their children to regular education at the age of about five. The Muslims usually performed the *maktab* ceremony of their children at the age of four years, four months and four days. Barring the poorer people engaged in agriculture or menial service, all Hindu children were sent to school to learn reading, writing and arithmetic. Since the days of Akbar, Hindus began reading Persian and many of them attended *maktabs* which were generally meant for Muslims. Unlike the Hindus, the Muslim in general did not display the same enthusiasm for the education of their children. European travellers noted that the average Muslim was indifferent towards the education of his sons. *Maktabs* were the primary schools meant for the beginners. They were kept by maulvis. Such schools, says Della Valla, existed in the time of Jahangir in every town and village. There were no printed primars and the children were made to write letters of the alphabet and figures on the wooden boards. In Muslim schools the Quran was invariably taught to every child who had to learn it by heart. In the Hindu schools lessons from the Ramayan, the Mahabharat and the Puranas were compulsory. Much attention was paid to elementary arithmetic and there was in vogue an interesting way of committing to memory the multiple of numerals, called "*Paharas*" which was practised in a class or by all the pupils of the school who formed one group for this purpose. Good handwriting was emphasised and calligraphy was practised. Classes were held twice a day, in the morning and in the evening with an interval for meals. Students were not required to pay fees, as imparting free education was enjoined by religion. The teacher was supported by the rich. Sometimes he received presents from the parents of his pupils. The teacher was held in great respect by his pupils and by the public alike. Corporal punishment, especially boxing of the ear, was administered to those pupils who were either lazy and did not learn their lessons or to those who committed mischief. Sometimes

negligence in doing the day's work, wilful mischief, and ill-manners were punished by detention after school hours, or by ordering the delinquent students to write a lesson ten or fifteen times over again.

There were higher seats of learning at many places where religious and secular education of a high order was imparted. Sometimes in a single town many higher schools or colleges existed and together they formed something like a university. Banaras and Nadia were such high seats of Hindu learning during the Mughul period. Bernier writes, "Banaras is a kind of university, but it has no colleges or regular classes as in our universities, but resembles rather the schools of the ancients, the masters being spread over different parts of the town in private houses." (*Bernier's Travels*, 1891, p. 341). Classes were held in these private houses which generally had gardens attached to them for this purpose. At Banaras were taught Sanskrit grammer, literature, the six systems of Hindu philosophy and Hindu religious scriptures. Nadia in Bangal was another great centre of Hindu learning, which like Banaras, was frequented by scholars from all parts of the country. Other higher seats of Hindu learning were Mithila, Tirhut, Mathura, Prayag, Hardwar, Ujjain, Ayodhya, Sarhind and Multan.

The Muslim seats of learning too were many. The Mughul emperors established schools at Delhi, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri and Lahore. Muslim scholars and theologians opened schools in big cities. Thus Agra, Delhi, Lahore, Jaunpur, Sialkot, etc., developed into main centres of Muslims learning. Agra enjoyed a pre-eminent position as a centre of Muslim learning during the Mughul period. It had many colleges most of which were established by the emperors or their nobles. Next in order of importance came Delhi which too had several colleges, the earliest of them having been established by Humayun and Maham Anaga (Madarasa-i-Begum). Although Lahore was not so famous as a centre of learning as Delhi and Agra in the early years of the Mughul period, its reputation began to spread abroad since the time of Aurangzeb. Jaunpur earned the name of the 'Shiraj of India' in the 15th century and retained its importance throughout the Mughul period. Lucknow, Allahabad, Gwalior, Sialkot, Ambala, Thaneshwar and Kashmir had many schools and scholars.

There is evidence to show that some Muslim students attended Hindu schools for instruction in astronomy, astrology, mathematics and medicine. From the time of Akbar ownward Hindus attended Muslim institutions to learn Persian. In the primary and secondary schools it was not necessary for a student to study for a fixed number of years. Intelligent and clever boys could attain proficiency within a short period at the end of which they were allowed to leave school. At the higher seats of learning the courses of study usually varied from 10 to 12 years for graduation. But no regular annual examinations were held. The teacher was the sole judge of the proficiency of his pupils in a particular subject. Sometimes a literary disputation in which the pupils took part marked the termination of their graduation course. No degrees or diplomas were usually awarded, and a student's ability and scholarship were usually judged by the reputation of one's teachers or the institution where he was educated.

Female education during the Mughul period was confined to princesses and upper class women. There were no schools for girls, but well-to-do people employed tutors for the education of their daughters. They were taught literature, elementary arithmetic, and religious scripture. Educated women were given high position in society and exercised great influence at home. Some educated ladies like, Gulbadan Begum, Salima Sultana, Rupmati, Zev-un-nisa and Zinat-un-nisa distinguished themselves in the literary sphere. Rani Durgawati and Chand Bibi, Nur Jahan, Jahanara and Sahibji played an important part in the politics of their time.

Literature.

Persian Literature—The advent of the Mughuls gave an impetus to the Persian literature. The Timuride rulers were themselves scholars and patrons of learning. Babur was a gifted poet of Turki and Persian as well as an accomplished writer in both these languages. Humayun was equally interested in literature. Many scholars flourished at their courts and wrote valuable works under their patronage. The reign of Akbar was a cultural renaissance in medieval Indian history. His tolerant and benevolent policy, his patronage of learning and internal peace and prosperity which he established, made possible the condition in which letters and arts flourish. It is, therefore, no surprise that many scholars of outstanding ability produced original literature of a high order during his reign. Persian Literature may

be classified under two heads, namely, original compositions and translations. Under the first category, letters and poetry occupied a prominent place. It was a fashion in that age to leave behind a collection of one's letters considered to be models of literary style. The letters of Abul Fazl and some other writers have come down to us and are considered models of Persian style of Akbar's age. Poetry was in the medieval age the most popular vehicle of literary expression, and Muslims—both Indian and foreign—were particularly fond of it. There was a large number of poets at Akbar's court. Abul Fazl tells us that many of these had a diwan (collection of miscellaneous poems) to their credit. The *Ain-i-Akbari* gives the names of 59 topmost Persian poets at Akbar's court. Besides these, 15 others who were supposed to belong to the first category, had sent their compositions from Persia. Abul Faizi, poet laureate of Akbar, was the greatest poet of Persian since the days of Amir Khusrau. Critics hold divergent views about the value of the Persian poems of Faizi and other poets. The historian V.A. Smith is of the opinion that these poets were no better than mere versifiers. Indian scholars, however, hold high opinion about the literary production of that age. Although one may not entirely agree with Smith, there is no doubt that the poets of the period, writing in Persian, paid more attention to the language than to thought, and their favourite theme in most cases was love.

Many writers wrote commentaries on the Quran. Among the notable works of history were Abul Fazl's *Akbar-Nama* and *Ain-i-Akbari*, Nizamuddin Ahmad's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, Jauhar's *Tazkirat-ul-Waqyat*, and Gulbadan Begum's *Humayun-nama*. Abbas Sarwani produced the *Tofa-i-Akbar Shahi* alias *Tarikh-i-Sher Shahi*. Akbar ordered the compilation of the history of 1000 years of Islam, and Naqib Khan, Mullah Muhammad of Thatta and Jaffar Beg were commissioned to write on the work. The book, with an introduction by Abul Fazl, was brought out in time and became known as a *Tarikh-i-Alfi*. Some of the other histories written during the period were Abul Qadir Badayuni's *Muntakhab-ut-Tawarikh*, Ahmad Yadagar's *Tarikh-i-Salatin-Afaghana*, Bayazid Sultan's *Tarikh-i-Humayun*, Nurul-Haq's *Zaud-ul-Tawarikh*, Asad Beg's *Waqayat*, and the *Akbar Nama* of Sheik Illahdad Faizi Sarhindi, and Arif Qandhari's *Tarikh Akbar Shahi*.

Akbar had many first rate works of Sanskrit, Arabic, Turki and Greek translated into Persian in order to provide a common literature

to the intelligentsia of the land. The *Tajak*, a well-known work of astronomy, and *Tujuk-i-Baburi* or the *Memoirs of Babur*, were translated into Persian. A part of *Zich-i-Jadide-Mirazai* and *Majmul-i-Buldan* were rendered into Persian. Many outstanding works of Sanskrit, such as, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Atharva Veda*, the *Raj Tarangini*, the *Harvansh Puran*, *Panch Tantra* and several others were translated into Persian.

Persian literature continued to flourish under Akbar's successors. Jahangir, himself a scholar and critic, wrote his own autobiography in imitation of his great grand-father Babur and named it *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*. It comes down to the 17th year of his reign. The work was continued under his orders by Mutamid Khan who brought it to the beginning of the 19th year. It reveals the daily life of Jahangir with candour and frankness except for a few incidents, such as, his revolt against his father, the circumstances leading to his marriage with Nur-Jahan and those of prince Khusrav's death, which were glossed over. The emperor extended liberal patronage to learned men who produced works of merit. Nasiri of Nishapur was the ablest poet of Persian at his court. Mutamid Khan, a courtier, wrote *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangiri* which is a primary authority for the history of Jahangir's reign. Some of the other historical works written during Jahangir's reign were *Maasir-i-Jahangiri* and *Zubd-ut-Twarikh*. Among the learned men who adorned his court Ghiyas Beg entitled Itmad-ud-daula, Naqib Khan, Mutamid Khan, Niyamat Ullah and Abdul Haq Dehlwi were the most prominent. Commentaries on the Quran continued to be written and poetry was produced in profusion. But the department of translation seemed to have gone into disuse. Shah Jahan, like his father and grand-father, continued the policy of patronising learned men and poets, the prominent among whom were Abu Zalih whose pen-name was Kalim, Haji Muhammad Jan and Chandra Bhan Brahman. A good deal of historical literature was produced during his time. Abul Hamid Lahauri, the court historian, wrote *Padshah Nama*. Another scholar of repute named Aminai Qazwini produced another *Padshah Nama*. Inayat Khan wrote *Shah-Jahan-Nama* and Muhammad Salih produced *Alam-i-Salih*. The emperor's eldest son Dara Shikoh was a scholar of outstanding merit. He was well-versed in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit and was the author of several works on Sufi philosophy and biographies of Muslim saints. He translated some of the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagwat Gita* and *Yogavashishtha*.

His most important original work was *Majm-ul-Bahrain* or the *Mingling of the Oceans* in which he attempted to show that Hinduism and Islam were the two paths to one goal and could easily fuse into one. Aurangzeb was a critical scholar of Muslim theology and jurisprudence, but he had no taste for poetry and was opposed to the writing of history of his reign. Yet several important histories were written during his time, though not with his patronage. Some of these were *Muntakhab-ul-Lubab* by Khafi Khan, *Alamgir Nama* by Mirza Muhammad Qazim, *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* by Muhammad Saqi, the *Nuskha-i-Dil-Kusha* by Bhim Sen, the *Futuhat-i-Alamgiri* by Ishwar Das Nagar and the *Khulasa-ut-Tawarikh* of Sujan Rai. The most authoritative and elaborate digest of Muslim law, known as the *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*, was produced by a syndicate of theologians under the orders of Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb's successors continued to patronise Persian literature until the time of Muhammad Shah (1713-48), after which their poverty and inability to express effectively in Persian, made them turn to Urdu which began to take the place of Persian. Yet even in the 18th century many books, especially on Sufism and history were written in Persian by Hindus and Muslims alike, but their literary value was small. Books on history continued to be produced in Persian, first under the patronage of the rulers of local dynasties and subsequently on account of encouragement from the English governors and officers. Some of these important chronicles are *Siyar-ul-Mutakhirin* by Gulam Husain, *Tarikh-i-Muzaffari* by Muhammad Ali Ansari, *Tawarikh Chahargulzar-i-Shujai* by Hari Charan Das, *Imad-ut-us-Saadat* by Gulam Ali Naqvi, *Maadan-us-Saadat* by Sultan Ali Safawai, *Ibrat Nama* by Khairuddin and *Hadi-qa-ul-Aqalim* by Murtaza Husain Bilgrami. Histories of the court of Delhi continued to be written until the end of Shah Alam II. These are too numerous to be named.

Hindi Poetry.

The 16th and 17th centuries formed the classical age of Hindi poetry. Although under Babur, Humayun and Sher Shah and his successors, court patronage was not available to the writers of Hindi poetry, yet a few of the most important Hindi works such as the *Padmawat* and *Mrigawat* were produced before the rise of Akbar. The *Padmawat* is a novel in verse and gives the story of Padmini, the queen of Mewar, in an allegorical form. The reign of Akbar became the golden age of Hindi poetry. The peace and order given by him and his

policy of religious toleration stimulated the genius of Hindi poets and enabled them to produce remarkable poetical works. The most notable luminaries of Hindi were Tulsi Das, Sur Das, Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, Ras Khan and Birbal. By universal consent of critics the first place amongst the poets of the age, both Hindi and Persian, belongs to Tulsi Das, who, however, was not known to Akbar personally. He produced twenty-five works of high standard, the most important among them being the heroic poem of *Ramcharitmanas*, popularly known as the *Ramayan*. The next most important poet was Sur Das who was even more prolific than Tulsi Das. He is known as the author of the *Sur-Sagar* and of many other songs in Braj Bhasha. Some critics look upon him as even greater than Tulsi Das. Probably he was the same man who was attached to Akbar's court and was known as the "Blind Bard of Agra". Many other Hindi poets graced Akbar's court. His reign was also marked by the advent of Muslim poets in the field of Hindi literature and poetry. Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, who successfully interpreted Indian culture in Hindi verse, stands pre-eminent amongst them. Several hundred verses from his pen—his *dohas* and *satsais*—have come down to us and are given an honoured place in our poetical selections. Another Muslim poet of Hindi was Ras Khan who was a devotee of Lord Krishna and wrote a large number of first-rate poems which depict Sri Krishna's life in the woods of Vrindaban. His *Prem-Batika*, composed about 1614, is very popular even now. Other distinguished writers at Akbar's court were Birbal, entitled Kaviraj, Raja Man Singh, Raja Bhagwan Das, Narahari and Hari Nath. Many poets of Hindi lived and wrote away from the court. Chief among them were Nand Das, Vithal Nath, Parmanand Das, and Kumbhan Das—all devoted to the cult of Krishna.

The most important feature of the age was that the literary activity was not confined to the court and the nobles. It was essentially a movement of the people and a large number of scholars and poets of Hindi were found in the country-side and were patronised mainly by local landlords and well-to-do public. One has to turn to the pages of Mishra Bandhu Vinod and Ram Chandra Shukla's *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas* to appreciate the spirit of that age which was responsible for the golden period of Hindi poetry.

Hindi poetry continued to flourish and receive patronage from Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The last days of Tulsi Das's literary

career were spent during Jahangir's reign. Several writers of note adorned the court under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, important among them being Sundar Kavirai (author of *Sundar Sringar*), Senapati (author of *Kavita Ratnakar*), Siromani Misra, Banarsi Das, Bhusan, Nati Ram and others. Deva Kavi was another famous poet who produced many works of religious poetry and the well-known Bihari was patronised by Mirza Raja Jai Singh. Besides these, there were Pran Nath of Panna and Dadu of Ahmadabad, who attempted to reconcile Hinduism and Islam, wrote verses and became founder of the *Prannathi* and *Dadupanthi* sects respectively. During this period Keshav Das of Orchha was a pioneer in this art. His *Kavi Priya*, *Rasik Priya* and *Alankarit Manjari* were considered models of poetics and prosody in that age.

Other modern Indian languages received a great stimulus during the Mughul period. Rajasthani was enriched by many compositions from the pen of Charans and other writers. Prithvi Raj Rathor's poems have immortalised their author, besides popularising Rana Pratap's love of liberty, his religion and country. Many chronicles were produced, important among them being Mohta Naisi's *Khyat, Khuman Raso*, *Hamir Raso*, *Rana Raso*, and Suraj Mal's *Vans-Bhaskar*. Bengali literature made great progress during this period. The Vaishnava religious literature dealing specially with biographies of Chaitanya, was produced by Krishna Das Kaviraj, Vrindavan Das, Jayananda, Trilochan Das and Narahari Chakravarty. The *Bhagwata Gita*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* were translated into Bangali.

The progress of Hindi literature received set-back in the time of Aurangzeb who did not patronize it; but Hindu scholars and poets continued to flourish at the court of Hindu Rajas. It deteriorated in the 18th century both in style and thought.

Urdu Language and Poetry.

The common spoken dialect, that emerged as a consequence of contact between the foreign Turks and other Central Asian people on the one hand, and the Hindus on the other, had its birth during the period of the Sultanate of Delhi. But it attained the status of a language during the days of later Mughul emperors. It was originally called Zaban-i-Hindavi and subsequently Urdu. It is

a dialect of the western Hindi spoken for centuries in the neighbourhood of Delhi and Meerut. The grammatical structure of this language is Indian, but gradually it began to have a preponderating vocabulary of Persian and Arabic words. Amir Khusrav is considered to have been the first Muslim writer who used this language as a vehicle for the expression of his poetical ideas. Urdu was not patronised by the Mughul emperors upto the first quarter of the 18th century, as they favoured Persian, and not this hybrid, though indigenous product. Urdu poetry known as Rekhta received its first encouragement from the Muslim Sultans of the Dakhin. It was not recognised at Delhi. But about the middle of the 18th century, Mughul rulers and nobility failed to retain Persian as their mother-tongue, and began using Urdu at home, in the court and the camp. Muhammad Shah (1719-48) was the first Mughul ruler to encourage Urdu by inviting the famous Dakhin poet Wali (who had paid a visit to Delhi in 1722) to give a recitation of his poems at his court. After this a number of Muslim scholars came forward to write Urdu poetry on a variety of subjects. Abru, Hatim, Naji, Mazmun and Mazhar were the earliest Urdu poets of Delhi who flourished in the second and third quarters of the 18th century. But Urdu became important after it was raised to the status of a court language by the English East India Company in the early years of the 19th century.

Sanskrit.

Babur and Humayun were not interested in Sanskrit and Hindi literature. Akbar was the first Mughul emperor to extend patronage to Sanskrit and many scholars and poets of this language adorned his court and received recognition at his hands. Most of the writers of Hindi poetry were also scholars of Sanskrit. Akbar not only listened to their poems, but also discussed with them the principles of Hindu religion and thought. During his reign the first Persian-Sanskrit laxicon entitled *Parsiprakasha* was compiled. Jahangir followed in the footsteps of his father and employed Sanskrit scholars and poets. Although Shah Jahan was an orthodox Musalman, yet he, in pursuance of his ancestral policy, extended patronage to scholars of Sanskrit. The famous Jagannath Pandit who was the author of *Ras Gangadhar* and *Ganga Lahri* was his Sanskrit poet laureate. Kavindra Acharya Saraswati was another scholar of Sanskrit who flourished at Shah Jahan's court and was patronised by him. The

court historian Abdul Hamid Lahauri gives the names of several other Sanskrit poets who were received by Shah Jahan from time to time and rewarded for their compositions. Apart from poetic works, the most useful were the dictionaries of astronomical and astrological terms that were brought out by Vedanga-Charya in 1643. Aurangzeb, however, had no soft corner for Sanskrit scholars and during his reign and that of his successors, Sanskrit scholars ceased to be honoured at the Mughul court. But Sanskrit learning continued to flourish at the court of Hindu rajas. The Sanskrit literature of the Mughul period cannot be called first-rate, original, and inspiring work of art.

Painting.

Inspite of the Quranic prohibition, the Mughul emperors loved painting. That art was first introduced in Persia by its Mongol conquerors in the 13th century. It was a provincialised form of Chinese art, considerably influenced by Indian, Buddhist, Iranian, Bactrian and Mongolian ideas. The Timurid rulers of Persia patronised it. Babur seemed to have come into contact with this school of painting during his visit to Herat and patronised it. Humayun, a lover of music, poetry and painting came in contact with the leading painters of Persia in the course of his exile and persuaded two of them, named Mir Sayyid Ali, a pupil of the famous Bihzad of Herat, and Khwaja Abdus-Samad to accompany him to Kabul in 1550. There Humayun learned painting from these masters and his son Akbar also took lessons in the art.

It was this art—the Chinese or Mongoloid school of painting that was brought into India by Akbar and introduced into his court. It mingled with the style of Indian painting which had come down from ancient times, despite neglect and want of patronage. The tradition of Hindu painting went far back into antiquity and came down to the 16th century through its noble representatives, the frescoes in the caves of Ajanta and the Bharhut and Ellora reliefs. The two systems, Persian (Chinese) and Indian, at Akbar's court began gradually to fuse and in course of time became one. The foreign characteristics of the art gradually dropped out and eventually it became purely Indian. The process of this evolution can be seen in the illustrations of some of the Persian works, such as the *Dastan-i-Amir Hamzah*, the *Tarikh-i-Khandan-i-Timuria* and the *Padshah Nama*

preserved in the Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna. The *Dastan-i Amir Hamzah* was illustrated with paintings by Mir Sayyid Ali and Khwaja Abdus Samad between 1550 and 1560 and clearly shows the pre-dominance of the Sino-Persian influence in its illustrations. From 1562 the fusion of Hindu and Sino-Persian style began to take place. This is clear from the famous painting depicting the arrival at the Mughul court of the famous musician, Tan Sen. The next stage in its evolution was reached between 1569 and 1585 when Akbar had the walls of his palace at Fatehpur Sikri embellished with the master pieces produced by the joint labours of the Hindu and Persian painters. During this process foreign characteristics of the art began gradually to disappear, and Indian characteristics reasserted themselves. Akbar's patronage attracted best painters to his court. The ablest and most numerous amongst them were Hindu painters. There were only a few Persian painters of outstanding ability, the most famous amongst them being Abdus Samad and Farrukh Beg, Khusrau Quli and Jamshed. Thirteen out of seventeen leading artists of Akbar's court were Hindus, the most prominent among whom were Daswant, Basawan, Sanwal Das, Tara Chand, Jagannath, Lal, Kesu, Makund and Haribans. Abul Fazl speaks highly of their art. "More than a hundred painters", writes he, "have become famous masters of the art, while the number of those who attain perfection or of those who are middling is very large. This is specially true of the Hindus, their pictures surpass our conception of things. Few indeed in the whole world are found equal to them." (*Ain-i-Akbari*, Vol. I, p. 107).

Akbar created a separate department of painting and placed Khwaja Abus Samad at its head. The emperor personally supervised the department and gave it every possible encouragement. The artists were enrolled as royal servants and granted mansabs in the imperial service. The emperor's interest led to the creation of a school of painting which may be called the National Indian School of Painting. Its members were drawn from all parts of India and even from outside. They belonged to various castes and religions, but were inspired by one common ideal, namely, the production of works of a high quality which would meet with the approval of the emperor who was a great connoisseur of the art. The portraits of Akbar, and the members of royal court were drawn and beautiful albums were prepared.

This school of painting continued to flourish in the reign of Jahangir who was an excellent connoisseur and a great patron willing to pay any price for high class pictures that could satisfy his aesthetic taste. The emperor had skill with the brush and could tell the names of the artists of paintings presented to him. "If there were similar portraits finished by several artists," writes he, "I could point out the painter of each. Even if one portrait were finished by several painters, I could mention the names of those who had drawn the different portions of that single picture." (*Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, tr., by Rogers and Beveridge, Vol. I, p. 20.) The most important Muslim artists at his court were Agha Raza and his son Abdul Hasan of Herat; Muhammad Nadir and Muhammad Murad from Samarqand; and Ustad Mansoor. Among the Hindu painters, the most prominent were Bishan Das (unrivalled portrait-painter), Manohar, Madhava, Tulsi and Govardhan.

The Mughul school of miniature painting reached its climax under Jahangir who was the soul and the spirit of the art. "Akbar laid the foundation of the Mughul miniature painting; but it was his son Jahangir, born of a Rajput princess, who by his knowledge and artistic intuition guided the new school of Indian art to maturity, and taught it by the influence of his own rare judgement to achieve success."

Shah Jahan continued his ancestral patronage, but he did not have the same passion for painting as his father and grandfather. He was more devoted to architecture and jewellery than to painting. Therefore, the art of painting fell from the high standard that it had attained under Jahangir. The number of court painters was reduced and the quality of their productions too suffered. The prominent court painters in the time of Shah Jahan were Faqirullah, Mir Hashim, Anup, Chitra and others. The paintings of Shah Jahan's time were characterised by a lavish display of gold and rich pigments rather than by the harmonious blend of colours. But his eldest son Dara was a jealous patron of the art and his death was a great blow to painting.

Aurangzeb, being an orthodox Musalman, was opposed to the pictorial art, which declined rapidly for lack of court patronage. He defaced the paintings in the palaces at Bijapur and Golkunda and white-washed the figures in Akbar's mausoleum at Sikandra.

Although some painters continued to reside in Delhi and painted portraits of the emperor, this was done without his permission. With the disintegration of the empire able painters migrated to the newly-established provincial courts of Awadh, Hyderabad, Mysore and Bangal. Lucknow and Patna extended to them the patronage of which they were capable. In Rajputana, however, the art continued to flourish. It became known as the Rajput school of painting. Jaipur and Nathdwara were its chief centres. A new school, known as the Kangra school, came into existence in the second half of the 18th century. One of its off-shoot was the Tehri-Garhwal school. The art of these schools are spoken highly of by competent critics.

Calligraphy.

Closely connected with the art of painting was that of calligraphy which was highly prized in India, Persia and China. It was looked upon as a fine art and was loved and encouraged by most of the Mughul emperors. Although Akbar was not literate, he had a taste for calligraphy and employed many men skilled in penmanship. They were commissioned with the work of producing beautiful copies of books for his library. Calligraphic writing was collected and preserved in albums like pictorial art. Abul Fazl tells us that eight modes of calligraphy were in vogue at Akbar's court, of which eighth kind, called Nastaliq was specially favoured by him. It consisted entirely of curved lines. The most famous calligraphist at Akbar's court was Muhammad Husain Kashmiri who was given the title of 'Zarin Qalam'. Jahangir too was fond of pen-man's art and employed calligraphists to produce fine manuscripts. Shah Jahan continued his ancestral patronage of calligraphy and Mir Hashim who was once a painter and a calligraphist, wielded a great influence at his court. Aurangzeb was himself a skilled calligraphist and used to transcribe the Quran. He showed much favour to his librarian. Jawahir Raqam, who was a good calligraphist. The art of calligraphy was employed in several ways, such as, in the engraving of the royal seal, in decorating buildings and monuments with text from the Quran and in beautiful albums.

Associated with calligraphy were the arts of artistic binding of books and illuminating them with lovely pictorial designs. Men employed for binding and illuminating the margins and covers of books or illustrating their themes with pictorial drawings were

classed as artists. They were highly valued as painters properly so called. Many designs of the books produced during the Mughul period, enriched by valuable bindings and adorned by costly illustrations, have come down to us and preserved in various manuscript libraries in the country. Some of the most important of these are the copies of *Babur Nama* (at Alwar and Agra* College), *Tarikh-i-Khandan Timuria*, and *Padshah Nama* at the Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna.

Sculpture.

Sculpture had made a remarkable progress in Ancient India; but it was not encouraged by Babur and Humayun who being orthodox Muslims followed the Quranic precept of abhoring images of living beings. But Akbar was not an orthodox Musalman and he encouraged the art of sculpture. He had the statues of Jai-Mal and Fatha, the Rajput heroes of Chittor, seated on elephants, carved out of stone, and had them placed at the gate of Agra Fort. The elephant gate of Fatehpur Sikri "is still guarded by the mutilated figures of two collosal elephants, perched on supports 12½ feet high whose trunks were originally inter-locked across the entrance". Jahangir too had two life-size marble statues of Rana Amar Singh and his son Karan Singh made and erected in the palace garden at Agra below the Jharokha-Darshan. We have no evidence to show that Shah Jahan encouraged the art of sculpture. It is a matter of common knowledge that Aurangzeb was positively against it and ordered the statues at Agra and Delhi to be broken to pieces and the stone elephants of Fatehpur Sikri and Agra to be defaced and damaged. The art, therefore, disappeared for want of patronage.

Decorative Carving.

The Mughuls were lovers of decorative relief carving and embellished their buildings with this art which on account of their encouragement and patronage reached a high level of excellence during this period. The delicate marble carving on the walls of the uppermost terrace of Akbar's tomb at Sikandra is of 52 different varieties. Besides, the building is embellished with representations of clouds, plants, flowers, butterflies, insects, and a conventional vase design." Relief carving, was supposed to be indispensable in high class Mughul buildings. Marble screen work carved in stone was

*This has now been sold to the Central Antiquities Museum, New Delhi.

equally fashionable. "The marble screen work at Shaikh Salim Chisti's tomb at Fatehpur Sikri and the admirable marble screen round the cenotaph in the Taj Mahal, show that in the reign of Akbar and Shah Jahan the artist could produce master-pieces of open work carving comparable with the finest specimen in Gujarat.

Mosaics.

The mosaic and inlay decoration too were profusely used in the Mughul buildings. In the time of Akbar, the mosaics were made from small *tesserae* which were combined in Persian geometrical patterns. But in Jahangir's reign *pietra-dura* began to be utilised for inlay work. It was composed of precious or semi-precious stones "cut into thin slices and nearly bedded in socket prepared in the marble." The earliest example of the use of *pietra-dura* inlay seems to have been made in celebrated Jag Mandir water-palace in the Pichola lake at Udaipur and in Itmad-ud-daula's tomb at Agra. In the time of Shah Jahan *pietra-dura* superseded the older mosaic ornamentation. Many of Shah Jahan's buildings in the forts of Delhi and Agra were decorated with *pietra-dura* inlay. Jahangir's tomb at Shahadra, the Shish Mahal and Nau-lakha in Lahore and the Taj Mahal at Agra are fine examples of the beautiful ornamentation of the *pietra-dura* art.

Music.

Classical music was one of the specialities of the ancient Indian culture and was patronised by most of our rulers, especially Samudra Gupta of the Gupta dynasty, who was so fond of the art that he engraved his portraiture on his coins with a *vina* in his hands. Although music was not commended by early Muslim jurists and was called *Mubah* (neither good nor bad and only allowed by the Shara) it was nevertheless cultivated by some Muslim notables of the Sultanate period (1206-1526), specially the rulers of the Sharqi dynasty of Jaunpur and Baz Bahadur of Malwa. The Mughul emperors were devoted to it. Babur was skilled in the art and is said to have written a treatise on it. Humayun was equally interested in song. Akbar displayed a marked preference for classical Indian music. "His Majesty", writes Abul Fazl, "pays much attention to music and is patron of all who practice this enchanting art". He was himself a skilled musician and no mean performer on the Naqqara (kettle drum). He had studied Hindu vocalisation under Lal Kalawant

who taught him "every breathing and sound that appertains to the Hindi language." He took steps to gather at his court the best musicians in the land and invited many others from foreign countries. Their number was very large and they included, as Abul Fazl says, Hindus, Iranis, Turanis and Kashmiris, both men and women. They were arranged in seven divisions, one being set apart for each day of the week to entertain the emperor and his court. Of these musicians 36 are mentioned by Abul Fazl in the *Ain-i-Akbari* and include Tan Sen and Baz Bahadur, an ex-ruler of Malwa. Tan Sen was the most notable musician of the age and according to Abul Fazl, "a singer like him had not been in India for the last thousand years." He had originally been in the service of the Raja of Rewa who was compelled to send him to Akbar's court in 1562-63. Tan Sen received his training in the school of music established at Gwalior by Raja Man Singh Tomar (1486-1518). He is said to have invented some new *rags*. According to some critics Tan Sen "falsified the *rags* of which two, *Hindol* and *Megh*, have disappeared completely since his day." Whatever may be the truth in this allegation Tan Sen enjoyed the "reputation of the best musician of the age." Some time after joining Akbar's service, he became a Muhammadan and was given the title of Mirza. He died in April 1589 and was buried at Gwalior. Another famous musician at Akbar's court was Baba Ram Das who ranked next only to Tan Sen. Bairam Khan, Akbar's regent, on one occasion conferred upon him a reward of one lakh of tankas. Another equally famous singer was Baiju Bawra. Sur Das too was mentioned among the first-rate musicians of Akbar's court.

Akbar's interest in and patronage of music led to great progress in the instrumental as well as vocal art. At his court Hindu and Muslim music mingled together and became one. To Akbar, therefore, belongs the credit of bringing about a fusion of the diverse systems of music and giving birth to the national Indian music.

Jahangir inherited his father's taste for music. He maintained many first-rate musicians at his court, regularly listened to their performance and extended to them his royal patronage. The *Iqbal Nama-i-Jahangiri* gives the names of six most notable musicians at his court. "Many hundred of musicians and dancing-girls", writes William Fintch, "attend there day and night, according as their several turns come every seventh day, that they may be ready when

the King or his women shall please to call any of them to sing or dance in his Mahal, he giving to every one of them stipend according to their worth." (*Early Travels*, W. Foster, p. 183). Shah Jahan too was devoted to music and song. Every evening before going to bed he used to listen to the best musicians of whom there was a large number at his court. Daily musical entertainment also used to be held in the Diwan-i-Khas of which the chief feature was vocal and instrumental music. Sometimes Shah Jahan himself who was highly skilled in the art took part in the performance. His voice was so attractive that "many pure souled Sufis and holy men with hearts withdrawn from the world, who attended these evening assemblies, lost their senses in the ecstasy produced by his singing." (*Studies in Mughul India* by Sarkar, Pp. 12-13). Shah Jahan was a great patron of musicians. Two of the chief vocalists at his court were Ram Das and Maha-Patra. It is said that the emperor was so delighted with the music of an ode recited by his Sanskrit poet-laureate Jagannath "that he had him weighed against gold and gave him the amount as his fee."

During the first ten years of his reign Aurangzeb, like his predecessors, listened to skilled musicians and extended patronage to the art. He maintained many good singers at his court. "Sweet voice singers and charming players on musical instruments", writes Saqi Mustaid Khan, the author of *Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, "were gathered in numbers round his throne and in the first few (ten) years of his reign he occasionally listened to their music......" (*Maasir-i-Alamgiri*, p. 526). But as Aurangzeb advanced in years and began practising self-restraint and abstinence, he gave up listening to music and dismissed the musicians from his court. But, as is wrongly supposed by some writers, he did not prohibit people from singing or enjoying vocal or instrumental music. Nevertheless the banishment of musicians from the court caused a great set-back to the art and obliged the court musicians to organise a funeral procession on a Friday when the emperor was going to the Jami Mosque for his prayers. The emperor hearing their weeping and lamentation inquired of the cause of sorrow. The musicians replied that the emperor's orders had killed music and they were taking her to the grave. Aurangzeb replied that "they should pray for the soul of the music, and see that she was thoroughly buried." In spite of the withdrawal of the royal patronage music and dancing continued to

flourish. The court ladies would not deny themselves the amusement which music and dance afforded them. Nobles, courtiers and other well-to-do persons and even common people continued their fondness for this enchanting art.

Architecture.

The Mughuls were great builders. By the time of Babur's invasion of India the Central Asian architecture with the dome, the lofty minarets, the arches and the vaults which had been brought by the early Turkish invaders, had flourished for over 300 years side by side with the indigenous Hindu architecture, which was characterised by flat roofs, narrow columns, the arches built on the canti-lever principle and corbel brackets, but had not been able to influence the latter to an appreciable degree. On the other hand, the Hindu ideas of art had considerably influenced the early Turkish architecture in the country. There were reasons for this. Firstly, the foreign Turkish rulers had to employ Indian craftsmen and sculptors who had their own clear ideas about the form and method of construction and, therefore, unconsciously introduced into Muslim buildings many decorative and architectural details which had been in vogue in this country for centuries in the past. Secondly, the early conquerors almost invariably built their mosques, palaces and even tombs out of the material of Hindu and Jain temples which they had callously destroyed. This, without doubt, modified in execution the foreign models which they might have had in view. Thirdly, notwithstanding the striking contrast between the Muslim and Hindu styles, their buildings resembled in some particulars, and, therefore, the Turkish Sultans sometimes converted Hindu and Jain temples into mosques by demolishing their flat roofs and providing domes and minarets in their places. On account of these circumstances the indigenous art continued to exert influence upon the Muslim architectural style and this influence lasted not only during the period of the sultans of Delhi, but also throughout the Mughul period and "expressed itself in the narrow columns, pilasters, corbel-brackets and other ornamental features of Mughul buildings."

Being a man of fastiduous critical taste, Babur did not much appreciate the buildings of the Turkish and Afghan rulers at Delhi and Agra. But he was moved by the beautiful architecture at Gwalior where he "went over all the palaces of Man Singh and

Vikarmajit" and pronounced them "singularly beautiful, though built in different patches and without regular plan." The palaces at Gwalior were a fine example of the Hindu architecture of the first quarter of the 16th century and became a model for Babur to turn to when he began building palaces for himself. He employed "many hundreds of workmen on his buildings in Agra, Sikri, Bayana, Dholpur, Gwalior and Aligarh (Koil)." But it seems that he built at these places pavilions, baths, wells, tanks and fountains, and not palaces and public buildings. His palaces seems to have been improvised structures which could not long stand the wear and fear of time. Only two of his buildings have survived and these are a large mosque in the Kabulibagh at Panipat and a Jama Masjid at Sambhal in Ruhelkhand, both built in 1526. A third building of his time is also a mosque, erected by Abul Baqi at Babur's orders at Ayodhya. But none of these possess any special architectural significance. Babur had a mind to invite from Constantinople a pupil of the famous Albanian architect, Sinan, to assist him in his building projects; but he seems to have given up the idea. Humayun, though equally fond of architecture, did not leave a prominent architectural monument to his credit. His palace at Delhi called *Din Panah* was built in a hurry, without much thought of quality or durability. Probably, it was destroyed by his rival Sher Shah. The two mosques built by him, one at Agra and the other at Fatehabad in Hisar, are in ruins and do not show any originality of design or execution. Both Babur and Humayun, however, on account of their taste and experience indirectly contributed to the establishment of a tradition favourable for the erection of buildings finer than those of the period of the Sultanate of Delhi.

Probably the best example of the Indo-Muslim architecture in the country before the reign of Akbar is the mausoleum of Sher Shah which was built by him on a high plinth in the centre of a lake at Sahasram in Bihar. The building is Muhammadan in design, but its interior is embelished with Hindu corbelling and horizontal architraves. Critics are of the opinion that it is intermediate between "the austerity of the Tughlaq buildings and the feminine grace of Shah Jahan's master piece." Sher Shah erected another important building, namely the Purana Qila on the site of Humayun's *Din Panah* which he had razed to the ground. Only a part of the Purana Qila has escaped the ravage of time. The mosque inside it,

known as the Qila-i-Kunhna Masjid, is "a structure of such admirable architectural qualities as to entitle it to a high place among the buildings of northern India."

No building of merit was constructed during the period between the death of Sher Shah and the accession of Akbar. After Akbar had taken the reins of government in his hands and given peace and order to the country under him, conditions became favourable for large scale building projects. The emperor's interest in and patronage of architecture led to the erection of magnificent monuments which fully justify Abul Fazl's remark that "His Majesty plans splendid edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay." Akbar mastered every detail of the styles of architecture in existence and supplied new ideas to his architects to translate them into practical form. He was able to give the impress of his personality to the buildings that were erected by his orders at Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Lahore, Allahabad, Attock and other places. The style of architecture evolved by Akbar represented a fusion of the Hindu and Muslim styles and may be called the mixed Hindu-Muslim style or national Indian style of architecture.

The earliest building of the reign is Humayun's tomb at Delhi built under the supervision by the emperor's step-mother Haji Begum. On account of Haji Begum's Persian sympathies and because the architect who was employed to build it was also a Persian—Mirak Mirza Ghiyas—this building is Persian in style. It is the earliest example in India of "a double-dome with slightly swelling outlines, standing on a high neck—a form of construction resembling the mausoleum of Timur and Bibi Khanam at Samarqand." The style is traced back to the Umayyid Mosque at Damascus built at the end of the 11th century. Next in point of time came the palace fortresses at Agra and Lahore which were planned and constructed under the supervision of Akbar himself. The walls of Agra Fort, nearly 70 feet high, are almost one and a half miles in circumference and are entered by two gateways, that on the western side being known as the Delhi Gate or Elephant Gate as its main archway was flanked by two stone statues of elephants, and the other, which is smaller, is called Amar Singh Gate. Within the enclosure Akbar erected more than 500 buildings of red sand-stone. Many of these were pulled down by Shah Jahan who replaced them by white marble pavilions.

The most important buildings of Akbar's time inside the fort are the *Akbari Mahal* with the white Bangali bastion, and the Jahangiri Mahal intended for the heir-apparent and his family. These palaces are made of red sand-stone and are designed on the plan of a central square court-yard "with ranges of double-storied rooms on each of the four sides." The principle of construction of the two palaces is the "beam and bracket"; the arch has been avoided as far as possible. The Jahangiri Mahal which was built a little later is characterised by a fine ornate handiwork and carved stone brackets which support the beams. The Jahangiri Mahal is Hindu in design and ornamentation and can well pass for the palace of a Hindu raja. The general character of the Agra Fort resembles that of Gwalior of the time of Man Singh. "The elephant gate-way, the copulas of Amar Singh gate-way, the palaces rising out of the fort walls, the planning of these palaces, and also some of the carved details, all indicate that Rajput citadel which had moved Babur to admiration some forty years before, was used freely as a model by his more fortunately placed grand-son." (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 538).

The Lahore Fort was constructed at almost the same time as the Agra Fort. The buildings inside were similar to the Jahangiri Mahal at Agra, with only one difference that the decoration in Lahore Fort is more vigorous and more unrestrained than at Agra. "Elephants and lions figure in the brackets and peacock at the friezes, from which it may be inferred that Hindu craftsmanship predominated and the supervision of the Mughul overseers was of a very tolerant order." The Allahabad Fort was built at a later day and many of its buildings including its inner walls have disappeared. The greatest architectural achievement of Akbar, however, is his new capital at Fatehpur Sikri crowded with fine buildings, the prominent among which are the record office, Diwan-i-Khas, Diwan-i-Am, the treasury, Panch Mahal, Mariam's palace, the Turkish Sultana's palace, the emperor's sleeping chambers and liberary, Jodha Bai's palace, and Birbal's palace. Outside the enclosure, stands the Jami Mosque with its lofty portal known as the Buland Darwaza. Inside the enclosure of the mosque lies the tomb of Shaikh Salim Chishti, which is built of white marble. Most of these buildings reveal mixed style which is partly Muslim and mainly Hindu in character. The decorative features in some of these, such as the cluster of the brackets that crown

the pillar in the Diwan-i-Khas, bell and chain in relief in the Panch Mahal and Jodha Bai's palace and carved figures of animals, etc., in Mariam's palace, are copies of those in the Hindu and Jain temples. The critics are of the opinion that Diwan-i-Khas is one of the most remarkable buildings. The Buland Darwaza which is built of marble and sand stone is "one of the most perfect architectural achievements in the whole of India." Fatehpur Sikri took about eleven years to complete (1569-1580) and though it is now a deserted place, "it still forms a most impressive revelation of a mighty personality."

Akbar built several other notable buildings, such as, the fort of Attock, a mosque at Merta, another at Amber and some other palaces, and he designed his mausoleum at Sikandra which was finished by his son. Besides, he built many sarais and schools and excavated many tanks and wells.

The new style of architecture evolved by Akbar produced a profound effect on buildings all over the country including those of the Rajput rulers of Rajasthan. The palaces built during the reign of Akbar at Amber, Bikaner, Jodhpur, Orchha and Datia indicate unmistakable Mughul influence. Even Hindu temples could not escape the nationalisation effect of Akbar's architecture. Hindu temples at Vrindaban show clearly that certain of their features were borrowed from the contemporary style of the Mughuls.

Jahangir was more devoted to miniature painting and gardens than to architecture and, therefore, there was a pause in the building operations of the Mughuls. He erected a few buildings, and these are poorer than the architectural achievements of his father. Nevertheless some of Jahangir's buildings are of exceptional merit. The tomb of Itmad-ud-daula at Agra built by Nur Jahan is the most remarkable building of the reign. It is built of white marble and is decorated with *pietra-dura* work in semi-precious stones. It was the first Mughul building made entirely of white marble and decorated with *pietra-dura* work. "Whether regarded as architectural composition of matchless refinement as an example of applied art, displaying rare craftsmanship, or as an artistic symbol of passionate filial devotion, the tomb of Itmad-ud-daula expresses in every part of it high aesthetic ideals that prevailed among the Mughuls at the time." (Percy Brown, *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 553). The next notable building is the mausoleum of Akbar at Sikandra which though

planned by the latter was erected under Jahangir's supervision between 1605 and 1612. The mausoleum consists of five square terraces, diminishing as they ascend, with no dome at the top, and therefore is a departure from the orthodox Muslim style which is invariably designed to contain the tomb-chamber with its cenotaph under a crowning structure which is usually a dome. According to some critics the style of the building is copied from the Buddhist Viharas. Probably the design of the uppermost floor included a light dome which, however, was never built. Jahangir's own mausoleum at Shahadra near Lahore was designed and planned by him. It is built after Akbar's mausoleum and is smaller in structure than the latter. It was surmounted by a marble pavilion which was removed by the Sikhs during their supremacy. The interior of the tomb is decorated by inlaid marble and painted patterns. The glazed tiles are an important speciality of the decoration. But according to Percy Brown "the whole composition is singularly ineffective."

The Mughul architecture reached the zenith of its excellence in the time of Shah Jahan who built palaces, mosques, tombs and pavilions of white marble at Agra, Lahore, Delhi, Kabul, Kashmir, Ajmer, Kandhar, Ahmadabad and other places. He pulled down many of Akbar's red sand stone structures in Agra and Lahore forts and rebuilt them of white marble which was available in unlimited supplies in the quarries of Makrana near Sambhar. In the Agra Fort Shah Jahan dismantled many of his grand-father's buildings that stood north of the Jahangiri Mahal and in their places erected Diwan-i-Am, Diwan-i-Khas, the Khas Mahal, the Shish Mahal, the Musamman Burj, the Machhi Bhawan, and the Moti Masjid. The Diwan-i-Khas with its series of double columns is a very graceful building and the Musamman Burj hangs "like a fairy bower over the grim ramparts." The Moti Masjid "on account of the flawless quality of its material and the skillfully modulated disposition of its elements represents the Mughul style at its zenith." No other building is more remarkable for the purity and elegance of its art than this mosque of white marble in the Agra Fort. The Jama Masjid at Agra with a succession of beautiful kiosks of varying sizes that crown its parapets is a notable piece of architecture. Similarly Shah Jahan made notable alterations in the fort at Lahore and erected the Hall of Forty Pillars (Diwan-i-Am), the Musamman Burj, the Shish Mahal, the Naulakha, the Khwabgah and other buildings in the north-

western portion. In 1638 Shah Jahan laid the foundation of a new city near Delhi (Shahjahnabad) and built therein a palace-fort, known popularly as the Red Fort. Inside were erected many beautiful structures of white marble, the chief among them being the Moti Mahal, the Hira Mahal and the Rang Mahal, besides official buildings such as the Diwan-i-Am, the Diwan-i-Khas, the music gallery and sundry offices and bazars. Each of the palaces was fronted by a garden with flowerbeds, water courses and ornamental fountains. The buildings are surmounted with a series of turrets, guilded domes and hanging balconies, and these were ornamented and lavishly decorated with perforated screens and mural paintings. The floor of the palaces and other buildings are paved with marble. The Nahar-i-Bihisht or Stream of Paradise, which entered the palace from the Shah Burj supplied water to all the apartments and was diverted into fountains. The most beautiful among these is the one in the central compartment of the Rang Mahal. Critics are of the opinion that the lovely structure of the palaces and their extraordinary rich and artistic decoration justify the inscription engraved on the wall of one of them.

> "If there be an Eden of bliss on earth,
> It is this, it is this, none but this."

At a little distance from the fort but inside the city wall Shah Jahan built the famous Jama Masjid of Delhi. It is a structure of considerable size and beauty and is very dignified and imperious in pattern. But the most remarkable of Shah Jahan's buildings is the famous Taj Mahal at Agra which is rightly looked upon as one of the architectural wonders of the world and which was erected at a cost of 4½ million pounds sterling. It was commenced in 1631 and was completed in 1653. The historian Smith's view that it is "the product of a combination of Europe and Asiatic genius" is no longer accepted by historians. It was designed by Ustad Ahmad and many craftsmen and calligraphists, both indigenous and foreign, were employed in its construction. "It may be noted," writes Percy Brown, "that while the structural portions seem to have been principally in the hands of Muhammdans, the decoration was mainly the work of Hindu craftsmen, the difficult task of preparing the *pietra-dura* specially being entrusted to a group of the latter from Kanauj." (*Cambridge history of India*, Vol. IV, p. 564). The building, though mainly Persian in design,

contains some features of Hindu architecture and decorations. "The main dome by its shape is plainly of Timurid extraction, its remote ancestor being the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem; on the other hand, the copulas with their wide eaves are of indigenous origin, being derived from the overlapping rings of masonry which formed the vaulted ceiling of the Hindu temple." (*Cambridge History of India*, Vol. IV, p. 565). The Taj Mahal is so flawless in its design and execution and so impressive on account of the chaste quality of its decorations, of the milk-white marble of which it is built, and above all of the conjugal love that inspired it, that it has been described as a lyric in stone.

After Shah Jahan's death the Mughul architecture began rapidly to degenerate. His successor Aurangzeb built little. The few buildings that he erected were mean and common place. The mausoleum of his wife Rabia-ud-Daurani built by him near Aurangabad, is a mediocre production with demeaned arches and meaningless embellishment. The Badshahi Mosque at Lahore, though of great size, is a poor imitation of the Jami Mosque at Delhi. After the emperor's death the style completely deteriorated and the buildings that were erected during the first half of the 18th century revealed bankruptcy of taste and poverty of design, finish and decoration.

Jewellery.

The art of jewellery had attained a high standard during the ancient period, as jewels and ornaments were coveted and worn by the Hindus, both men and women, since the earliest times. The art was, however, greatly improved by the Mughul emperors who were fond of jewels and ornaments. Humayun acquired the celebrated Koh-i-Nur diamond from the family of Raja Bikramajit of Gwalior. Akbar had an enormous collection of jewels including a large number of extremely fine rubies which were made into two rosaries, each valued at ten lakhs of rupees. Jahangir's jewels, many of which were inherited from Akbar, included 1½ maunds of unset diamonds, 12 maunds of pearls, 1 maund of rubies, 5 maunds of emeralds, one maund jade, besides jewelled ornaments and furniture. Shah Jahan among all the Mughuls was passionately fond of jewels and possessed personal jewellery worth five crores of rupees, besides that worth two crores which he presented to the members of the

royal family. He had a peacock throne made of pure gold and studded with jewels. "The throne was in the form of a cot bedstead of golden legs. The enamelled canopy was supported by twelve emerald pillars, each of which bore two pea-cocks encrusted with gems. A tree covered with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, and pearls stood between the birds of each pair." The inner roof was enamelled and the outer one was covered with rubies and other jewels. "Three jewelled steps led to the emperor's seat, which was surrounded with eleven jewelled panels, of which the middle-most bore as its central gem a splendid ruby presented by Shah Abbas I to Jahangir." The pea-cock throne was carried away to Persia by Nadir Shah in 1739. It no longer exists in the world. The workmanship and value of jewellery owned by the Mughul royal ladies baffle description. The art began to deteriorate in the 18th century on account of the decline and fall of the Mughul empire and consequent poverty of the royal family and the nobility.

Gardens.

There had existed gardens in India long before the advent of the Mughuls; but they were not geometrically designed and erected pleasances in all cases. Babur brought to our country the new style of gardens which had been developed in Persia and Turkistan and whose chief characteristics were "artificial irrigation in the form of channels, basins or tanks and dwarf water-falls, so built that the water brimmed to the level of the path on either side; and the plan involved a series of terraces on sloping ground, usually numbering eight to correspond with the eight divisions of Quranic paradise; but sometimes seven to symbolise the seven planets." The main pavilion was built on the topmost terrace and sometimes on the lowest terrace in order to enable the occupant to have an uninterrupted view of the foliage and the waterfalls.

Babur, who was extremely fond of lovely flowers and foliage, laid out such a garden at Agra. It became known as Ram Bagh. Humayun who was not inferior in aesthetic taste must have beautified his new city of *Din Panah* at Delhi with symmetrical flower and fruit gardens. Akbar following the example of his ancestors laid out gardens in the Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri and other places. But the most remarkable garden associated with his name is that of Sikandra where he lies buried. In the centre of this garden stands his beautiful

mausoleum. The plan of the garden is a fourfold plot, surrounded by a huge enclosure with four gates in the centre of each of the four walls. The mausoleum which stands in the centre, is flanked by tanks with central fountains in the front. There are symmetrical channels of water. The channels and water courses are paved with fine ceremic ware and are lined with cyprus, pine, and palm trees, and beautiful plants.

The Mughul garden was brought to perfection during the reign of Jahangir who laid out gardens of most elegant style wherever he sojourned for any length of time. One of Jahangir's most charming gardens is the Shalamar Bagh at Srinagar in Kashmir, with a background of mountains and commanding the view of the beautiful Dal lake. The other important gardens constructed during his reign were the tomb gardens of Itimad-ud-daula at Agra and his own at Shahadra near Lahore. Both these are built on the same plan as the garden at Sikandra and are distinguished by series of raised fountain tanks and eight large terraces. Asaf Khan, the brother of Nur Jahan, laid out Nishat Bagh at Srinagar in Kashmir which is one of the most lovely gardens in the country.

Shah Jahan was equally interested in gardens. He laid out the famous Shalamar garden near Lahore which is next to that of the Taj Mahal in beauty and fame. It comprises two Char-baghs joined by a narrow terrace with a high reservoir in its centre. There are pavilions on either side of the reservoir and the entire circumference is parcelled into flower beds. The Red Fort of Delhi was embellished by a number of gardens, the most lovely among which was the Hayat Bakhsh. It was the largest and the most enchantingly laid out garden in the fort with its familiar patterns of square flower beds amidst flowing water courses, and surmounted by two pavilions called Sawan and Bhadon. Other gardens of Shah Jahan's time were the Tal Katora Bagh and Shalamar Bagh at Delhi and Dara's garden in Kashmir known as Wazir Bagh.

Aurangzeb who denied himself many pleasures natural to humanity did not display any fondness for gardens. Nevertheless the art of garden building did not disappear from the country. Of course, it fell from the high standard of excellence that it had attained during the reigns of the early Mughul emperors. A beautiful garden was laid out in the enclosure of the Badshahi Mosque at Lahore.

Another fine garden was erected at Pinjor in the Punjab by Fidai Khan. Aurangzeb's daughter Zeb-un-nisa laid out a beautiful garden near Lahore and named it Chahar Burji garden.

Many of the Mughul gardens have suffered on account of the wear and tear of time and many have altogether disappeared. But those that have remained are enough to show that the eulogy inscribed at the gate of the Shalamar Garden near Lahore is not wholly undeserved :

"Sweet is this garden through the envy of which the tulip is spotted,
The rose of the sun and the moon forms its beautiful lamp."

Books For Further Reading

1. *Early Travels in India,* edited by W. Foster.
2. *Travels in the Moghul Empire (1656-1668)* by Bernier, edited by Constable and Smith.
3. *Travels in India* by Tavernier.
4. *Storia do Mogor,* Vols. 1-4, by Manucci, translated and edited by William Irvine.
5. *Rambles and Recollections of Sleeman,* edited by V. A. Smith.
6. *India at the death of Akbar* by W. H. Moreland.
7. *From Akbar to Aurangzeb* by W.H. Moreland.
8. *Ancient Indian Education* by F.E. Keay.
9. *Promotion of Learning in India during the Muhammadan rule* by N.N. Law.
10. *Studies in Mughul India* by Sir J. Sarkar.
11. *Literature of Hindustan* by George Grierson.
12. *Music of Hindustan* by Fox-Strangways.
13. *Court Painters of the Grand Moguls* by L. Binyon.
14. *Indian Painting under the Mughals* by Percy Brown.
15. *History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon* by V.A. Smith.
16. *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* by Ferguson.
17. *Indian Sculpture and Painting* by E.B. Havell.
18. *Garden of the Great Mughuls* by C.M. Villiers Stuart.
19. *Cambridge History of India,* Vol. IV, Chapter XVIII.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MUGHUL EMPIRE : ITS ACHIEVEMENT AND FAILURE

Nature of Mughul Rule.

Some modern writers of Indian history have either misunderstood the nature of the Mughul government or have intentionally exaggerated its benevolent character. The Mughul rule has been described as 'national rule' and the Mughul period has been called the 'age of Indian nationalism'. The reasons for painting it in bright colours are obvious. In the first place, the Mughul empire was the immediate predecessor of the British rule and our scholars animated by a feeling of patriotism and a hatred of the British domination naturally tried to show that the age that preceded the latter was better and more congenial to the Indian genius. Consequently, they pictured the Mughul period as one in which the country was ruled over by Indians and, therefore, in their eyes it was an age of nationalism. Secondly, the Mughul government was without doubt an improvement upon that of the period of the Sultanate of Delhi (1206-1526). The latter was an Islamic State, pure and simple, and gave no religious toleration to the Hindus who formed a preponderatingly large majority of the country's population, and indulged in stifling persecution. To our writers, therefore, the conciliatory Mughul rule naturally appeared to be a bright chapter in our history. Thirdly, the Mughul dynasty produced a ruler of the outstanding ability of Akbar who enunciated the commendable policy of impartial treatment for all his subjects irrespective of race and religion, and attempted to improve the material and cultural lot of the people. His example was followed by his two immediate successors, though not in the same degree. Modern Indian writers who either could not or would not take a correct and comprehensive view of the entire Mughul period were misled into thinking that what was true of Akbar and Jahangir must also be true of Babur and Humayun and of Aurangzeb and the later Mughuls. Fourthly, for the sake of communal harmony and with

a view to create a feeling of pride in the Indian Muslim community for our common history, some of the modern Hindu writers have deliberately glossed over those facts in our recent history which happened to be unpleasant to our Muslim countrymen, as the latter have invariably displayed a pronounced partiality for the Muslim rule and fancied themselves, no doubt wrongly, as having formed the ruling class during the medieval period of our history. Finally, the mispresentations by our modern Muslim writers, as a class, who have tried to falsify history by suppressing the inconvenient truth and indulging in exaggerations in describing the achievements of the Mughul rule, have misled not only text book writers, politicians, and rank and file of the Hindus, but also some of the serious students of our history.

The Mughul rule was mainly foreign, and only partly Indian. Babur and Humayun were foreign conquerors; their ideals and aspirations, their way of life, and their system of government were foreign. Babur would not even like to be buried in India and if Humayun had not died a sudden death, it is possible that he too would have left a will for his body to be carried to Kabul to lie in permanent rest by the side of his father. It was Akbar who not only reversed the policy of his ancestors, but tried to imbibe Indian thought and mode of life. But the age of toleration that he inaugurated in 1563 when he abolished the *jizia* lasted hardly for 90 years out of more than 250 years of Mughul rule (1526-1803). Even during this period of 90 years there were numerous instances of departure from toleration and of Muslim fanaticism on the part of Jahangir and Shah Jahan when Hindu temples were destroyed and forcible conversion to Islam took place. It will, therefore, be historically wrong to call the entire Mughul period an age of Indian nationalism. It was in fact an age of conflict between the Indianisation of administration and the fanatical revival of the principles and practices of an Islamic state in this country.

The principles on which the Mughul administration was based were both foreign and Indian. In fact, the foreign Arabic and Persian elements had a preponderating share in it, and therefore, the Mughul administration has been rightly called "the Perso-Arabic system in Indian setting". As Sir Jadunath Sarkar observes "the principles of their (Mughul rulers') government, their church policy,

their rules of taxation, their departmental arrangement, and the very titles of their officials were imported ready-made from outside India. But a compromise was effected with the older native system already in possession of the field and familiar to the people governed. The details of the imported system were modified to suit local needs." The emperor and his court drew their inspiration from Persia and Egypt.

The personnel of the Mughul government was also mostly foreign. Seventy per cent of the high officials under Akbar were foreign Persians, Turks, Uzbegs, and Afghans, and only thirty per cent consisted of Indian Muhammadans and Hindus. Although Akbar threw open state employment to the Hindus, yet in actual practice the number of appointments held by them was small. In the course of forty years Akbar employed only 21 Hindus on mansabs of 500 or above, and out of these 17 were Rajput chiefs of Amber, Marwar, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Bundelkhand. He employed 37 Hindus on mansabs of less than 500, and of these 30 were Rajput princes of smaller states. Only four non-Rajput Hindus were appointed to mansabs of 500 to 5000 and these were Birbal, Todar Mal, Todar Mal's son and another prominent Khatri. The proportion of Hindus in the imperial service was lower during the reigns of all other Mughul rulers down to the end of the reign of Jahandar Shah (when the empire was already in dissolution), except during the later years of the reign of Shah Jahan. It will be clear from the above analysis that all important key positions in the government were held by foreigners. A government with a preponderatingly foreign personnel cannot be called a national government.

The Mughul government was a military occupation of the land and it retained this character till the end. It maintained a very large army which was mostly foreign in personnel, and it established powerful garrisons in strategic places to overawe the people and keep them in check. All officers of the Mughul imperial service were enrolled as mansabdars, that is, commanders of army. There was no distinction between the civil and military service, and there was no civil treasury properly so called. It is unfortunate that the Mughul government continued to be in military occupation of the land and performed only two main duties, namely, the maintenance of internal and external peace and the collection of revenue.

It undertook no socialistic duties, that is, it did not attempt to advance the physical, intellectual and moral welfare of the teeming millions that inhabited this country. It did not attempt to educate the people. Although the emperors opened some schools and subsidized some learned men, this patronage was extended to a few favourites connected with the court and not for spreading education among the masses. Literature, poetry, music and painting were encouraged at court, but this was a personal matter with the rulers who made no attempt to spread Art and culture in the country. But the greatest failing of the Mughuls lay in a deliberate and successful attempt to keep the two major communities, Hindus and Muslims, perpetually divided. This was in keeping with the Islamic tradition of keeping the eternal difference between the Muslims and non-Muslims. Akbar alone, of all the Mughul emperors, made a short-lived attempt to bring about a homogeneity of the people, but it lasted hardly for 25 years and was given the goodbye after his death. Jahangir deliberately reverted to the pre-Akbar days in this respect, prohibited the Hindus from marrying Muslim women, and made the offence a capital punishment. Shah Jahan did the same. Aurangzeb and his successors were Muslim monarchs in the orthodox sense of the term. The result was a gulf between the two communities which exists till today—a legacy to us from the Mughul rulers.

Condition of Hindus.

"Every political system", writes the historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "is ultimately judged by its effect upon the material prosperity and moral advancement of its people." If we apply this criterion to the Mughul rule in India, it must be pronounced a sad failure; for, barring the one short generation under Akbar when the moral and material condition of the people was on the whole good, the vast majority of our population during 1526-1803 led a miserable life. The accounts of the contemporary European merchants and travellers as well as the casual references thrown out in the pages of the contemporary Muslim writers make it clear that the lot of the Hindus as a whole was very hard and their lives, honour and property were not quite safe.

"The root cause of this universal ruin," in the words of Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "was a very basic conception of Islamic theocracy. The rigid law of the Shariyat, when applied to the complex problem

of the government of mankind, destroys the homogeneity of the people and the basis of political justice by dividing the population into two eternal separate groups,—the faithfuls and the infidels. 'Unity in diversity' such as obtains between the Protestant British and the Catholic French-born in Canada under the wise and just British rule, was impossible in a pure theocracy, whose root principles were framed in 650 A.D. and have remained rigid since then. Under such a system 'Progressive Legislation' is impossible, because it amounts to a questioning of the Prophet's omniscence." (*Hindustan Standard, Puja Annual*, 1951). Some writers hold that in the Mughul period the persecution of the Hindu religion and political repression of the Hindu people took place only during the reign of fanatical Aurangzeb and that throughout the remaining period Hindus enjoyed full rights and led happy lives. But this view is erroneous. Notwithstanding Akbar's laudable attempt to bridge the gulf between the Hindus and the Muslims during the last 25 years of his reign, eternal difference between them created by the Shara' since the advent of Islam in the land, continued to exist throughout the Mughul period. Akbar's regulations against it were repudiated by the Muslim population in the land and as has been pointed out, Jahangir reverted to the pre-Akbar-day *status quo*. For the Hindus, political equality, full religious toleration, the right to make converts and preach their religion in public, and equal standing under the law came to an end with the death of Akbar, and lasted in a restricted form till the end of Shah Jahan's reign. The Mughul kings, generally speaking, believed in Islamic theory of the state according to which the repression of non-Muslims and their religion was the duty and toleration could be only an exception or rather a neglect of duty on the part of the government. When the government happened to be weak or negligent the Muslim masses took up the duty of persecuting the Hindus and keeping them in their 'proper place'. Every now and then Muslim zealots raised their heads in various places, took the law in their own hands and indulged in temple-breaking and other acts of sacrilege. Such incidents were common enough during even the days of the decline of the Mughul empire. For instance, in September 1755, the qazi and muhtasib of Banaras along with a crowd of Muslims threw down a new temple that had been built near the ancient shrine of Visheshwar Mahadeva which led to a *hartal* in the city. (*Delhi Chronicle*, p. 128). The atrocities committed by Maulvi Sayyid Ahmad of Bareilly in the early years

of the 19th century are matters of common knowledge. On account of these factors "the Hindus at the best of times lived a restricted, insecure life, cultural and spiritual, because the alien mob, led by the Mullas, might swoop down upon them any moment, while the guardians of law and order remained indifferent or powerless to protect them (Sarkar, *Society during the Muslim Period*, Hindustan Standard, Puja Annual, 1951). In southern India, however, where the number of Musalmans was very small and the Hindus were masters of large states and powerful enough to resist oppression, there was little persecution. In northern India, on the other hand, where religious persecution of the Hindus was the rule, Hindu culture could flourish only in the semi-independent Rajput states and out of the way places.

The worse effect of the cramping Mughul rule was that the Hindus could not speak or write the truth; they could not deal with the Muslims on equal terms, and developed low cunning, hypocrisy and even deceit to get on in the world. The demoralisation of the Hindu character is the greatest blot on the theocratic Mughul rule in India.

Except under Akbar and for some years under Jahangir, the economic condition of the Hindu masses was far from satisfactory. The just and generous revenue regulations of Akbar's time were allowed to lapse under his successors. Aurangzeb added to the burden of the Hindus by re-imposing the *jizia*, the pilgrim's tax and the tax for throwing the bones of dead Hindus into the Ganga. He discriminated against them in matters of taxation as we have seen in a previous chapter. Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb increased the rate of revenue. Akbar had charged one-third, but Shah Jahan demanded one-half of the gross produce of the soil. According to Abul Fazl, Akbar's revenue amounted to Rs. 13,21,36,831/-. Shah Jahan's revenue according to Abdul Hamid Lahauri was Rs. 22,50,00,000/-. Aurangzeb's revenue during the first decade of his reign amounted to Rs. 38,68,16,584/-. This did not include the *jizia*, the pilgrim's tax and sundry other taxes imposed on Hindus particularly. Contemporary European travellers, like Bernier, Tavernier and Manucci, tell us that the masses of the people, who were of course Hindus, were compelled to work to support the splendour and extravagance of the Mughul court and the luxury of

a frivolous bureaucracy. They inform us that cultivation had to be enforced by compulsion and the state imposed intolerable burdens on the cultivators who were made to part with most of the fruits of their labour. Moreland sums up the condition of the masses in the following words: "Weavers, naked themselves, toiled to clothe others. Peasants, themselves hungry, toiled to feed the towns and cities. India, taken as a unit, parted with useful commodities in exchange for gold and silver, or, in other words, gave bread for stones. Men and women, living from season to season on the verge of hunger, could be contented so long as the supply of food held out; when it failed, as it so often did, their hope of salvation was the slave-trade, and the alternatives were canabalism, suicide, or starvation. The only way of escape from that system lay through an increase in production, coupled with a rising standard of life, but this road was barred effectively by the *administrative methods in vogue*, which penalised production and regarded every indication of increased consumption as a signal for fresh exertion." (Moreland: *From Akbar to Aurangzeb*, Pp. 304-5).

The dawn of a new era of hope for the masses of our people has appeared, after a thousand years' misery, with the attainment of freedom, the establishment of adult suffrage and the abolition of landlordism (zamindari).

Why the Mughuls succeeded in conquering Rajasthan and the Doab, which the early Sultans had not.

It may be asked as to why did the Mughuls succeed in conquering the Doab, subduing the valiant Rajputs and bringing under their effective control the whole of northern India and some parts of the Dakhin, while the Sultans of Delhi had failed to do so and had been compelled to undertake annual expeditions in order to realise revenue and keep the turbulent people in many parts of the country in check. The reason is not far to seek. It should be remembered that the Hindus in general and Rajputs in particular had fought persistently for more than 350 years to preserve their independence and culture from successive hordes of invaders from Afghanistan and Central Asia; but at the opening of the Mughul period they were now almost exhausted. While our people who had to face the invaders were pretty nearly the same, fathers, sons or grandsons etc., with their ranks thinned and dispirited and their resources exhausted, the

successive invading forces were ever fresh from their barbaric homeland in Central Asia or Afghanistan. Secondly, the Mughuls were fortunate in coming at a time when the invention of gun-powder had revolutionised warfare in Europe and Western Asia, and equipped them with artillery, big as well as small, which was manned by Turkish experts. Our people, on the other hand, were ignorant of the use of gunpowder and possessed no artillery. They were bewildered at the havoc caused by Babur's guns at Bajaur and Bhera, in the plains of the Punjab and at Panipat and Khanua. Their arrows were no match for the Mughul bullets. Thirdly, the Mughul system of warfare which was brought by Babur (described in the Second Chapter of this book) was far superior in respect of arrangement and formation of the troops on the battle-field and the tactics employed in the course of the action. Fourthly, the Mughul rulers from Babur to Aurangzeb with the only exception of Jahangir were superior in generalship and diplomacy to our rulers and statesmen who were out of touch with the developments of weapons and military tactics that were taking place in Persia, Central Asia and Europe. Fifthly, it is worthy of note that the real subjugation of northern India including Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and the Doab which had successfully defied the might of the sultans of Delhi times out of number, was brought about by Akbar and not by his predecessors like Babur and Humayun, nor by his successors, namely Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. And Akbar was not only a soldier with a brilliant career of unbroken victories to his credit, but also a statesman of the highest calibre who understood the value of Rajput friendship and was eager to conciliate them by a policy of religious toleration and friendly alliance. In the words of Col. James Tod, he shrewdly realised that as far as the Rajputs were concerned "constant exhibition of authority would not only be ineffectual but dangerous, and the surest hold on their fealty and esteem would be the giving them a personal interest in the support of the monarchy." It was, therefore, in fact Akbar's charm of manners and high statesmanship that really conquered the Hindus, specially the Rajputs, and not the might of his legions. Under him conquest and consolidation went hand in hand; he inflicted injury with one hand and healed the wounds with the other. No Sultan of Delhi could ever rise to such a height of statesmanship. Sixthly, Akbar's diplomacy successfully divided the Rajputs, played them off against one another, and thus reduced effectively the strength of their opposition. All other rulers

of Rajasthan joined Akbar in his war against Maharana Pratap, the greatest Rajput hero and patriot of the second half of the 16th century. The historian Badayuni referring to Raja Man Singh's exploits in the battle of Haldi-Ghati against Pratap in 1576 naively though correctly observes that only that day he realised the meaning of Mulla Shirin's remark that the "Hindu wields the sword of Islam." It was, therefore, the Hindus who conquered India for the Mughuls, as in the 18th and 19th centuries it were mainly the Indians who conquered India for the British. Jahangir and Shah Jahan made no material addition to the Mughul empire except securing the nominal submission of Amar Singh of Mewar and of the Raja of Kangra and reducing a few patches of barren tracts in the Dakhin. It is a matter of common knowledge that more than twenty-five years' effort by Aurangzeb in the Dakhin not only ultimately brought no territorial gain for the Mughul empire, but even caused its decline and dismemberment within thirty years of that emperor's death.

Muslims refused to be absorbed in Indian Society.

At the opening of the Mughul period a powerful movement for the reconciliation of Hinduism and Islam was going on in the land. Chaitanya and Nanak were its two living leaders who emphasised love and devotion to God, denounced caste and domination of the priests, and deprecated religious dogma and its outward forms and ceremonies. But the Muslim rulers and the Muslim public were not much influenced by the movement and refused to believe that Ram and Rahim, Ishwar and Allah were different names of the same God. Nevertheless the movement continued and in the time of Akbar the Hindus made a fresh attempt to absorb the Muslims. They wrote the Allopanished and tried to convince the emperor that he had been a Hindu anchorite in his previous life and had performed a penance (*tap*) at Prayag, so that he might be born a king. Akbar ordered the spot which was alleged to have been the site of his hermitage to be dug and a hermit's jug, a deer-skin and some other articles appropriate in a saint's hut were discovered. The Hindu pundits also declared that the ruler of Delhi was the ruler of the Universe and "went perilously near to making an *autur* of Emperor Akbar." The Darshaniya Brahmans would not have their breakfast without having a look at the emperor's face in the morning. The court flatterers went to the extent of preaching that the emperor

was something more than an ordinary human being. But they failed to absorb the Mughuls in the fold of Hinduism.

The Mughuls, like other Muslims, had come to India not only to conquer the country, but also to convert its people to Islam. Islam is a militant faith and its followers are zealous missionaries who look upon it to be their main duty to propagate the message of Muhammad. Secondly, "Islam is a fiercely monotheistic religion" and is opposed to any kind of compromise with polytheism. "Hence, the absorption of the Indo-Muslims in the fold of Hinduism by recognising Allah as another of the numberless incarnations of Vishnu and Muhammad as an inspired Sadhu, was impossible." Thirdly, the Mughuls, like the early Turko-Afghan rulers, were foreign conqerors and despised the Hindus as inferior people. They were filled with the conquerors' innate pride and were determined to retain their separate identity. Fourthly, it was not possible for Hindu missionaries and teachers to succeed with a people who punished apostasy from Islam with death and made it a capital crime for any one who tried to seduce a Muslim from his religion. If a Hindu, who was converted to Islam showed any inclination to the religion of his forefathers, he was, according to the laws of the Islamic State, to be put to death. This law obtained throughout the Mughul period except during the later half of Akbar's reign. Fifthly, no one throughout the Muslim rule in the country was allowed to utter a word against Prophet Muhammad's life or teachings. Any one who was guilty of insult to the Prophet, i.e., Sabb-al-Rasul, was punished with death. "The Muslim jurists made Zindqism (i.e., heresy or free-thinking), *an intellectual rebellion insulting to the Prophet's honour* (and therefore punishable with death)." (See Sarkar, *Mughul Administration*, 4th edition, p. 101). On account of this rigid penal rule the mildest criticism of Islam and its founder was unthinkable during the Mughul period. Sixthly, inter-marriages between the Hindus and Musalmans without which the fusion of the two communities is impossible, were ruled out by the invariable Muslim practice of converting a Hindu girl to Islam before marrying her and compelling a Hindu to become Muslim before he could be allowed to marry a Muslim woman. It should not be forgotten that Islam does not sanction civil marriage of our time. The only lawful marriage in Islam is that of which the parties are Muslims and if either of the parties is non-Muslim, he or she must become Muslim in order to make the marriage legal. Under these

circumstances, all the efforts of our reformers and teachers to bring about unity between the two communities came to nothing and the Muslims continued to retain, in the words of Jadunath Sarkar, "the extra Indian direction of their hearts."

Achievements of the Mughul Rule.

An important achievement of the Mughul empire, as also of its predecessor, the Sultanate of Delhi, was that it put an end to India's isolation into which she had fallen since the decline of the Cholas. For want of contact with the rest of the world, our outlook had become narrow and culture stereotyped, and the spirit of progress was taken out of the people. The restoration of touch with most parts of Asia and Africa again enabled our country to enter the world-current of life and thought and to participate in the international trade of the medieval age. India once again began having commercial relations with Bokhara, Samarqand, Balkh, Khorasan, Khwarzim, Persia and the countries of Malay Peninsula. Since the establishment of Mughul rule, Afghanistan had become part of the Mughul empire and remained so till 1739. We had both land and sea routes for contact and trade with the outer world. The ports of Thatta, Baroach, Surat, Chaul, Rajpur, Goa and Karwar were the outlets of our trade with Arabia, Persia, Turkey, Egypt, Barbary, Abyssinia and Zanzibar. Our ports on the eastern coast, such as, Mauslipatam sent ships to Egypt, Sumatra, Java and China. The inland routes passed through the Bolan Pass to Kandhar and from there to Persia. There was frequent coming and going throughout the Mughul period.

Next, the Mughul empire gave political unity to the whole of northen India and a large part of the Dakhin by bringing practically the entire sub-continent of India, minus the far South, under one central government, and giving it a centralised unitary system of administration. All the twenty Mughul provinces had the same system of administration, the same official language, official titles and the same administrative rules and regulations. The officers and troops were transferred from province to province, and travellers, traders and pilgrims frequented the entire land. All this created the imperial oneness of the country and made people of one province feel at home in another province.

Thirdly, nearly two hundred years' external peace and internal order and security given by a series of able and long-lived monarchs stimulated agriculture, trade and industry and brought about an era of economic prosperity. The government established many workshops for large scale manufacture of fine cotton and woollen fabrics, carpets, tapestry, gold and silver ornaments and many other articles of luxury. The just and generous revenue system established by Akbar made the lives of two generations of our peasantry happier than under the Sultanate of Delhi. The international commerce enriched our upper and middle class people.

Fourthly, the Mughuls, (and their predecessors the Turko-Afghans to a lesser degree) were responsible for encouraging the art of historiography. The Hindus did not particularly cultivate the art of writing history and even when they did, they did not care to give the dates of events. The Muhammadans, on the other hand, took care to maintain official records, to write chronicles and to give exact day, month and year of writing. Contrary to the Hindus who had many eras commencing from various dates and based on different systems, Muhammadans made use of only one era, namely, the Hijri era. The rulers patronised historians and some of them wrote their own autobiographies. Consequently during the Mughul times numerous chronicles and historical letters were written. These supply us with authentic details of the main events of various reigns. That is why it has been possible for modern Indians to produce many scientific works of research on the history of the Mughul period.

Fifthly, by affording much greater facilities for daily contact between the Hindus and Muslims than was possible under the Sultanate of Delhi, the Mughul age made for a better understanding between the two major faiths in the country. For the first time in our history Indian Musalmans began to study and appreciate Hindu religious scriptures and thought. Abdul Fazl and Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, Ras Khan and Dara Shikoh, made a sympathetic study of our Shastras and interpreted them through Persian prose and Hindi poetry. On the other hand, a closer association of Islam produced reaction in the Hindu society and although in the beginning Hinduism had tried to defend itself by making the caste system more rigorous, it did not fail to be influenced by the rigid monotheism of that religion. An important result was the desire of a compromise

with the new faith. Our teachers and reformers began stressing on the fundamental unity of religions which were, they said, only different paths leading to the same goal. But it is wrong to suppose, as Hunter and some other European writers have done, that "the monotheistic or at least anti-Brahman and anti-caste movements among the Hindus in the middle ages were due to the influence of Islam." The highest minds among the Hindus have since the earliest times believed in the unity of God and recognised "the one supreme God behind the countless deities of popular worship. Therefore, it is not historically true that Islam taught the Hindus monotheism. But Islam did give an impetus to the movements against the supremacy of the Brahmans and religious rituals and indirectly promoted the cause of the Bhakti movement, which afforded "a common meeting ground to the devout men of both creeds, in which their difference of rituals, dogma and external marks of faith, were ignored." Nanak, Dadu and Chaitanya in the beginning of the Mughul period preached the message of friendliness to all and deprecated religious bigotry of the Brahmans and the Mullas and attempted to create a common religious brotherhood, the members of which were equal before God and had not faith in the rigid dogma of any particular religion. The movement lasted for a long time during the Mughul period. Sufism which aimed at bringing advanced Hindus and Muslims on a common platform made its appearance in the liberal atmosphere of Akbar's court and continued to attract highly educated Hindus and Muslims alike throughout the Mughul period. Sufism may be called an off-shoot of the Vedanta of the Hindus. It was a faith of 'intellectual emotional enjoyment' in which the devotees were supposed to feel the presence of God and have direct communion with him. On account of this limitation, Sufism was confined to highly learned men, philosophers and mystics who were free from the trammels of the religious dogma. From the time of Akbar, Sufism spread rapidly among the intelligentsia in the land. His liberal religious policy made it possible for the Hindus and the Musalmans to come together at court and in camp and hold assemblies of Sufi teachers and their followers without hinderance or difficulty. The emperor himself had leanings towards Sufism and patronised Sufi scholars. His great-grand-son Dara Shikoh "openly declared that he had found the fullest pantheism (*tauhid*) in the Vedanta only and prepared Persian translation of fifty of the Upnishads and another work bearing a significant title of the Maja-maul-Baharain or 'the Mingling of the Two Oceans,'

which explains for Persian readers the technical terms of Hindu pantheism, with their parallels in Sufi phraseology, in order to facilitate the study of the subject by members of both creeds." Thus Sufism, like the popular religious sects of Kabir, Dadu, Nanak and Chaitanya, sought to bring the Hindus and Muslims closer together.

Sixthly, the Mughuls made a notable contribution to the development of fine arts, such as, architecture painting and music. They were great builders and under their liberal patronage architecture made a great advance. Our Hindu rulers had not cared to erect mangificent and enduring palaces and lavished their wealth and skill on temples. The Mughuls, on the other hand, built not only mosques but also palaces, tombs and gardens. Akbar made deliberate attempt to bring about a fusion of the Islamic architecture with the indigenous Hindu style with the result that a new style of architecture called the Indo-Muslim architecture or the Mughul architecture became the common property of the Hindus and Musalmans as far as their secular buildings were concerned.

It was, however, in the domain of painting that the Mughuls made the greatest contribution. They brought the Chinese painting, which had found favour in Persia, into India and this art mingled at Akbar's court with the indigenous Hindu painting which had come down to us from ancient times through its noble representatives in the caves of Ajanta. Under Akbar's patronage a national Indian school of painting was established and the Chinese and Indian paintings were fused into one. In course of time, the foreign influence gradually disappeared and the art became purely Indian. Our artists displayed highest genius in painting portraits in the reign of Jahangir when Indian school of painting reached the climax of its development. This school of art even now holds the field and goes by the name of 'Indian art' or 'Mughul painting.'

Seventhly, the Mughul rule by establishing peace and a sense of security in the country caused an unprecedented growth of modern Indian languages and literatures. Although Sanskrit books continued to be written, Sanskrit literature had really ceased to grow after 1200 A.D. For want of patronage and owing to the depressing political cultural and economic atmosphere created by the establishment of the Sultanate of Delhi, the Hindu intellect had become almost barren for nearly 350 years (1200-1550). But from the beginning

of the 16th century circumstances began to change and on account of comparative peace and stability in the land Hindu scholars and thinkers began to come to their own. There was a sudden outburst of literature, not in Sanskrit but in our vernaculars. This was particularly true in Hindi poetry. Malik Muhammad Jaisi of the Rai-Bareli district in Uttar Pradesh was the first poet of this age to produce two immortal works, namely, the *Mrigawat* (1502) and the *Padmawat* (1540). Then came other valuable Hindi works, such as, the *Akharawat*, *Sapanawat*, *Kandarawat*, and *Madhu-Malati*. Next to Usman's *Chitrawati*, came Sur's *Sahitya Lahri* and Purshottam's *Dharama-Shamedh*. The master writers of Hindi poetry, however, were Tulsi Das and Sur Das whose works, the *Ramayana* and the *Sur Sagar*, are looked upon as the best classics of that language. Abdur Rahim Khan Khanah and Ras Khan and a score of other poets whose names are given in the previous chapter made immortal contribution to the Hindi poetry of the Mughul age. Bangali was similarly enriched by several first-rate works, mostly the biographies of Chaitanya, the most important among them being the *Chaitanya Bhagwat*, the *Chaitanya-Charitamrita* and the two *Chaitanya Mangals*, written by Jaya Nand and Lochan Das. Many other religious works were produced by Vaishnav writers.

Persian literature was, of course, produced in profusion owing to the patronage of the Mughul emperors and their nobles. Commentaries of the Quran and other religious literature, historical works and independent books on other useful subjects, besides poetry, were brought out in large numbers. The authors of these works were Indians; but much of the Persian literature produced during the age was from the pen of foreign emigrants from Persia who were employed in the Mughul court. Much of the Persian literature specially poetry is not of much value, as it consisted mostly of fulsome flattery of the emperor and the members of the royal family.

Urdu was born in the 15th century on account of contact between the foreign Muslims and indigenous Hindus. It became a *lingua-franca*, but was not patronised by the Mughuls until the end of the third quarter of the 18th century, for Persian continued to be the court language and also the language of polite society and culture. The Mughul emperors and nobility despised Urdu. Urdu was known as *Rekhta* in the Dakhin where on account of the patronage of

the local Sultans, it produced a number of poets in the 16th and 17th centuries, the most important of them being Wali of Aurangabad who flourished at the end of the 17th and early years of the 18th century.

Eighthly, Hindu social manners, literary expression and mode of life were considerably influenced by Musalmans during the Mughul period. Although the Hindus and Musalmans had lived side by side for more than 300 years during the Sultanate period, yet in that age our manners and mode of life were not much influenced by the new comers. But the Mughuls were a cultured people and were accustomed to a higher standard of living. Their example, therefore, modified the dress, manners, language and behaviour of our upper and middle class people who came into intimate contact with them, but the common people remained unaffected. Many of our sports and amusements were 'Muhammadanised' in method and terminology. This was particularly the case with hunting, hawking, polo and shatranj and other games. Our language and style of composition could not remain free from Muslim influence. Many Persian, Arabic and Turkish words entered into our vocabulary and they are found in large numbers in Hindi, Bangali, Gujarati, Marathi and other modern Indian languages. The Hindus writing books in Persian usually commenced them with "In the name of God, the most merciful and compassionte" after the Muhammadan style and introduced their main theme only after writing something in the praise of God, Prophet Muhammad, and the Imams. As Persian had become the court language since the time of Akbar, many middle class Hindus of the 17th and 18th centuries read even their religious books in that language and some made use of it in uttering their daily prayers. Even the people in the rural areas could not remain immune from Muslim linguistic influence. For example, legal terminology of Persian relating to such words, as document, plaintiff, defendant, sale, mortgage, etc. became common property of the Hindus and Muslims alike.

Ninthly, the Mughuls greatly improved the art of war. When Babur came to our country, he found that the old system of warfare according to which the troops on the battle field were divided into four traditional divisions still held the field and artillery was unknown in northern India. Babur brought the field artillery and the new

military tactics which he had learnt from the Turks, the Mongols, the Persians and the Uzbegs. Moreover, the Mughuls commanded much larger armies than the Hindus and forced all their troops to obey the commander-in-chief without murmur. All this called for greater organising capacity and generalship than was necessary for controlling small armies. They also developed a more efficient system of defence by fortifying the north-western frontier. They built huge forts and fortifications. They discarded the elephants of the Hindu times, gave prominence to cavalry, and introduced military feints, tactics, manoeuvre and diplomacy in order to gain victory. The Rajputs, on the contrary, had looked upon war as a tournament and staked every thing on the issue of a fair fight in the field.

Tenthly, the Mughul system of administration with all power concentrated in the hands of the emperor was so well-organised and their court ceremonials, dress and etiquette produced such a spectacular effect upon the people that the system with its ceremonials was borrowed by the semi-independent Hindu rajas and became part and parcel of Indian life. The Mughul fondness for elegant dress, luxurious articles of food and new styles of crockery, perfumes, music and dance, was imitated by upper-class Hindus. This brought the leading Hindu families in the land in line with the Mughul aristocracy.

Causes of the fall of the Mughul Empire.

The first and foremost cause of the downfall of the Mughul empire was the progressive deterioration in the character of the later Mughul emperors. The Mughul government was a centralised despotism. In such a system of government every thing depends upon the personality and character of the reigning sovereign; if he happens to be strong and efficient, the administration goes on well; but if contrary is the case, his weakness is reflected in every branch of government and things invariably go wrong. The first six Mughul emperors were men of ability and strength of character. But Aurangzeb's successors from Bahadur I to Bahadur II were mere nonentities with little personal ability and no strength of will. For this Aurangzeb was to a great extent responsible; his life was so prolonged that his second son succeeded him at the age of sixty-two and his grandson became ruler at fifty-one, when they had little energy or ambition left in them. Moreover, he was so suspicious of his sons that he cast two of them into prison and surrounded them all by spies who

reported to him their plans and designs and prevented the development in them of initiative, enterprise and a sense of responsibility. His successors accelerated the process of deterioration by keeping the princes at court and not allowing them an opportunity of acquiring a practical knowledge of administration, diplomacy and war in distant provinces. Consequently, the Mughul princes in the 18th century degenerated into helpless puppets in the hands of the nobles. Bahadur Shah I who succeeded Aurangzeb was popularly called a " heedless king ". His successor Jahandar Shah was a profligate fool; Furrukh-Siyar was the most cowardly prince of the Mughul house, and Muhammad Shah was known as "Rangila." Ahmad Shah and his successors were no better than tools in the hands of their selfish and unscrupulous ministers. It was not possible for such incompetent men who could not rule over themselves to manage the affairs of an empire.

The next cause of the decline and fall of the empire was the degeneration of the Mughul nobility. The history of India of the time of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan was made by Bairam Khan and Munim Khan, Muzaffar Khan and Abdur Rahim Khan Khana, Itimad-ud-daula and Mahabat Khan, Asaf Khan and Saadula Khan. But with the decline in the character of the later Mughul emperors, decline also set in in the character of the nobility. Wealth and leisure which the foreign Muslims acquired in India fostered luxury and sloth and the presence of many women in their harems encouraged debauchery, which, in their turn, undermined their character and love of adventure. Consequently, physical, moral and intellectual degeneration overtook the governing classes. Sir Jadunath Sarkar rightly observes that on account of such a degeneration hardly could any aristocratic Mughul family retain its official importance for more than one or two generations. If, in the dictionary of the Mughul peerage, called the *Massir-ul-Umra*, a nobleman's achievements were mentioned in three pages, his son's usually occupied nearly one page, and the grand-son was dismissed in a few lines such as these 'that he did nothing worthy of being recorded there.' The Turks, the Afghans, the Persians, and other Central Asian Muslims were exotics in India, and it was natural for them to deteriorate in the uncongenial soil of this country. It must not be forgotten that the Turks and Afghans are essentially a military people who could not but degenerate when little work of active military conquest was left for them to do. And when the emperor ceased to be the judge and

rewarder of merit, the nobles had little encouragement or incentive to die for the empire.

The third important cause was the demoralisation of the Mughul army which by its origin and composition was weak and defective. It consisted chiefly of contingents recruited and maintained by the high officers and nobles who were assigned revenues of large tracts of the country for their maintenance. On account of this the individual soldier looked upon his mansabdar as his chief and not as his officer. There was no touch between the emperor and the individual soldiers who were paid by their commander or mansabdar and not directly from the royal treasury. The inherent defects of this radically unsound system were aggravated during the reigns of Aurangzeb and his successors. As the authority of the later Mughul emperors relaxed, the great nobles or officers of the empire began to convert the assignments which they held for maintaining troops, into their hereditary possessions. This left the emperor without a strong body of personal troops to enable him to assert his authority. Besides, on account of the weakness of the imperial authority the mansabdars became so jealous of one another that a commander would often deliberately refrain from bringing a three-fourth won battle or a siege to a successful conclusion, if he felt that another officer would share the credit of his success. Moreover, it became the habit of Mughul officers from the last quarter of the 17th century to be in treacherous correspondence with the enemy. As the emperor and the Mir Bakhshi themselves lacked ability and firmness of character they could not enforce proper discipline in the army which was reduced to a well-armed mob. Military crimes were overlooked even by Aurangzeb and no regular punishments were inflicted for deriliction of duty. For these reasons the army which had carried the Mughul banner to the extreme corners of the country and even beyond to the river Oxus and the Helmand in Central Asia, became useless for offence and defence.

Fourthly, another main cause of the fall of the empire must be ascribed to its economic bankruptcy. Akbar had established an equitable financial system under which the country had prospered, the government had become rich and the people had led fairly comfortable lives. Under his successors this arrangement deteriorated. The demand made by the government upon the producers became

so heavy that the latter succumbed to them. On the contrary, the court squandered huge sums of money in reward to energy and ingenuity employed in unproductive work. Akbar's revenue system which dealt directly with the tillers of the soil began to fall into disuse in the time of his son and grandson. It was mostly abandoned under Aurangzeb and his successors who farmed out the land to contractors. The result was that the direct demand on the producers was greatly increased and the reward that fell to their share was reduced "to a figure at which it ceased to offer an adequate incentive to productive toil." This became clear in the time of Shah Jahan. "All the writers of the time," observes William Foster, "extol the splendour of his (Shah Jahan's) court, the liberality of his rule, and his personal popularity. At the same time, they do not conceal the fact that this splendid facade hid a crumbling interior. Such extravagant expenditure was a crushing burden upon the resources of the country; while the venality of the officials and the tyrannical caprice of the Mughul governors added to the misery of the people, who had little or no means of obtaining redress." (*English Factories in India*, 1655-60, pp. 1-2). Shah Jahan increased the state demand to one-half of the produce of the soil and as the revenue demand rose the production fell in the same proportion. The cultivators began deserting their fields, but they were compelled by force to carry on the cultivation. Bankruptcy began to stare the Mughul government in the face in the times of Aurangzeb and his successors who had to fight many wars to gain the throne and retain it. The economic collapse came in the time of Alamgir II who was starved and the revenues even of the royal privy-purse-state were usurped by the unscrupulous wazir Imad-ul-Mulk. A month and a half after his accession, Alamgir II had no suitable conveyance to enable him to ride in procession to the Idgah and he had to walk on foot from the harem to the stone mosque of the fort. The historian Sir Jadunath Sarkar writes that once no fire was kindled in the harem kitchen for three days, and one day 'the princesses could bear starvation no longer and in frantic disregard of *parda* rushed out of the palace to the city; but the fort gates being closed they sat down in the men's quarters for a day and a night, after which they were persuaded to go back to their rooms." (*Fall of the Mughul Empire*, Vol. II, 2nd ed., p. 27). This happened in 1755. The wonder is that the bankrupt Mughul government lasted for another fifty years.

Fifthly, Aurangzeb's unwise policy of religious persecution of the Hindus, who formed the bulk of the country's population, hastened the fall of his dynasty. Akbar had won over the Hindus by giving them religious toleration and opening careers to talent irrespective of caste, race or creed. He had enlisted Hindu warrior tribes, chiefly the Rajputs, as reliable defenders of his throne. The Rajputs under him and his three immediate successors had carried the Mughul banners to the extreme corners of the sub-continent of India and also into the heart of Central Asia. But as Aurangzeb reimposed the hated *jizia* on the Hindus, distrusted the Rajputs and made an unworthy attempt to convert the heir to the *gaddi* of Marwar to Islam, the Rajputs were alienated and were determined to fight the Mughul oppressor. The Rathors and the Sisodias remained practically in rebellion till the downfall of the empire. Their example was followed by the Bundelas and the Sikhs. The Jats were of course the first to lodge a strong protest against the policy of religious persecution and to attack the Mughul district officer of Mathura who had built a mosque on the site of a sacred Hindu temple; known as Abdun-Nabis' Mosque, and was abducting the Hindu girls. The Jat rebellion with temporary breaks remained a sore in the side of the Mughul empire and did not come to an end even after the establishment of the independent Jat kingdom of Bharatpur. The Sikhs under Guru Govind Singh vowed vengeance against the Mughuls for the emperor's brutally putting the ninth guru Tegh Bahadur to death. He converted his followers into militant sect by establishing the famous Khalsa which became a potent factor in the down-fall of Aurangzeb's dynasty.

Sixthly, in his desire to extirpate heresy in Islam, Aurangzeb turned against the Shias with as much bitterness as against the Hindus. The bigotted emperor not only discriminated against the Shias (on account of their belief in the hereditary succession of Ali to the *Khilafat*) in the matter of state employment, but he even put down their teaching, their schools, and religious practices. The Persian Shias were gifted scholars, able administrators of outstanding ability, specially in matters relating to finance. They had contributed richly to the brilliance of the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan; but now they felt that they were not wanted by the staunch Sunni emperor Aurangzeb and, therefore, they ceased coming to India to serve the Mughul empire. The Shia residents in the country

who were equally proficient in war and civil administration, had to suffer persecution. Shia-Sunni riots took place and the emperor openly sided with the Sunnis. The result was that not only did the migration of fresh talent from Central Asia came to an end, but that in India also it was killed on account of lack of patronage and active hostility.

Seventhly, Aurangzeb's Dakhin policy which caused the destruction of his best soldiers and undermined the Mughul prestige beyond repair, contributed materially to the downfall of his dynasty. He destroyed the Shia kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda and waged a long endless war of extermination against the Marathas. This obliged the hardy Marathas to fight in self-defence, and when success came to them, they were encouraged to take up the offensive, cross the Narmada and invade the Mughul provinces in northern India. The Hindus in northern India were already alienated by Aurangzeb's policy of religious persecution and the Hindu officers and vassals of the empire were either indifferent or secretly hostile to the Mughul cause. This was the opportunity of the Marathas. They appealed to the common religious sentiments of the Rajputs, the Bundelas and of other Hindus who secretly allied themselves with Baji Rao when the latter boldly proceeded to execute his policy of striking at the withering trunk of the Mughul empire in the belief that after the fall of that empire the independent provincial Muslim dynasties would fall off themselves. Thus within thirty-one years of Aurangzeb's death, his successors had to wage wars with the Sikhs, Jats, Bundelas, Rathors, Kacchwahas and Sisodias and "no Hindu tribe of military value was left" on their side. "The Hindus," writes Sir Jadunath Sarkar, "not only ceased to be loyal vassals of the later Mughuls, but became open enemies against whom large forces had to be diverted by the emperor in his day of danger from foreign invasion." (*Later Mughuls*, Vol. II, p. 310).

Eighthly, the formation of hostile cliques at the court in the time of the later Mughul emperors, when they were faced with internal and external dangers undermined the solidarity of the government and brought about the fall of the empire. It was expected that in the moment of danger and difficulty Muslim nobility would present a united front against the foreign invaders, like Nadir Shah or Ahmad Shah Abdali, and against internal rebels like the Jats, the Sikhs and the Marathas. But this was impossible under

a weak and profligate monarch who did not possess the requisite qualities of leadership and hence the courtiers turned their backs upon the controlling authority at the court. The nobles at the court of the later Mughul emperors were divided into two main factions, the Turani or Central Asian faction and the Irani or Persian faction. The Turanis were Sunnis, while the Iranis were Shias. The chief Turani leaders at the time of Nadir Shah's invasion were Asaf Jah Nizam-ul-Mulk and Qamr-ud-din Khan who were opposed to the Persians whose leaders were Amir Khan, Ishaq Khan and Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk. They were so bitterly hostile to each other that in their quarrels they forgot the interest of the empire. "Each faction tried to poison the ears of the emperor against the other, thwart its plans, stir up its discontented servants, and even engaged in active hostility to it when at a distance from the court. Rebels could not be opposed with all the armed strength of the empire; they could always count upon secret supporters or at least neutral make-believe opponents in the imperial court and camp."

Ninthly, from the beginning of the 18th century the Muslim community as a whole, including the Mughul nobility and middle class people suffered from intellectual bankruptcy and mental despondency, which paralysed their activity. Leaving aside Nizam-ul-Mulk there was no able and far-sighted leader among the Mughuls who could produce a well-thoughtout scheme of national regeneration. Even Nizam-ul-Mulk was a thoroughly selfish and disloyal noble who instigated the Marathas to invade the Mughul territory in order to preserve the virtual kingdom that he had carved out for himself in the Dakhin. The reason was that there was no education in Mughul India which could properly train the intellect and emotion of the public, impart to them the qualities of leadership and thus ensure the requisite supply of right type of men for various fields of activity from among the masses. For want of a healthy educational system the Mughuls in the 18th century produced no political genius "to teach the country a new philosophy of life, or to kindle aspirations after a new heaven on earth. They all drifted and dozed in admiration of the wisdom of their ancestors and shook their heads at the growing degeneration of the moderns."

The Mughul aristocracy would not retain Persian as their mother-tongue after 1750, and yet they would not adopt Urdu or

any other Indian language and make it the medium of their literary expression. While they spoke Urdu at home and outside, they clung to Persian as their court language and as the language of refinement and culture. This led to the literary barrenness of the Musalmans in general and Mughul aristocracy in particular.

Tenthly, the Mughul government was a police government and except in Akbar's time contented itself with two duties only, namely, maintenance of internal order and external peace, and collection of revenue. But when the government became weak and could not maintain internal order and external peace, it lost all justification for its existence and the people would not respect the authority that could not suppress the rebellions of its vassals and save them from foreign invaders. Ambitious provincial governors took advantage of this state of affairs and established their independence. Early during Muhammad Shah's reign, Nizam-ul-Mulk made himself a virtual ruler of the six subas of the Dakhin. Saadat Khan Burhan-ul-Mulk established an independent dynasty in Awadh, and Bangal, Bihar and Orissa under Ali Vardi Khan disregarded the authority of Delhi. The Marathas had won their independence long before this time; next they established their supremacy over the Mughul provinces of Malwa, Bundelkhand and Gujarat and then sought to bring the entire country under their domination.

Eleventhly, the remnant power, wealth and prestige of the empire was damaged beyond repair by Nadir Shah, who invaded the country early in 1739, defeated Muhammad Shah, ordered a massacre at Delhi and carried away a huge booty, including the famous peacock throne, all estimated at seventy crores of rupees. He tore away the province of Afghanistan from the empire and heaped humiliation upon the Mughul emperor, Muhammad Shah. This was followed by seven invasions of his lieutenant, Ahmed Shah Abdali, who had now become king of Kabul after the assasination of Nadir Shah. This ferocious Afghan bled our country white many a time and prostrated the Mughul empire.

Twelfthly, the rise of the English East India Company and its conversion from a trading organisation into a territorial power with ambition to conquer and rule over India dealt a death blow to the Mughul empire. The Mughuls failed to keep pace with the times as far as military tactics and weapons were concerned. Their

ancestors in the time of Babur had conquered India by taking advantage of the decadent military system then in vogue in this country. The British with the help of the new fangled weapons, new system of warfare and military training and discipline after the European model did the same to the Mughuls in the 18th century what the Mughuls had done to the Pathans in the 16th century. The British power was entrenched on the seas and could not be dislodged without a superior navy. The Mughuls had no navy, and therefore, did not count in the struggle with the power that was supreme on the seas.

Finally, after all, the Mughuls were essentially a foreign people and their government an alien domination over the vast majority of the people of this land. Consequently, it lacked spontaneous popular support and its foundation was weak. It could not ever expect to evoke "such feelings as those which led the people of Maharashtra to follow and fight for Shivaji; it drew no strength from ancient tradition, which has always exerted so marked an influence upon Hindu ideals and sentiments." An alien empire can last only as long as it is powerful. When the Mughul empire became weak its decay and downfall were inevitable.

Books For Further Reading

1. *Mughul Administration*, (4th Ed.,) by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.
2. *India Through the Ages*, (4th Ed.,) by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.
3. *Downfall of the Mughul Empire*, Vols., I-IV, by Sir Jadunath Sarkar.
4. *The First Two Nawabs of Awadh*, (2nd Ed.) by A.L. Srivastava.
5. *Influence of Islam on Indian Culture* by Tara Chand.
6. *Presidential Address of the Mughul Section* by Tara Chand, vide the Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Calcutta, 1939.
7. *Society During the Muslim Period* by Sir Jadunath Sarkar, vide Hindustan Standard, Puja Annual, 1951.
8. *Mughul Government and Administration* by Sri Ram Sharma.

